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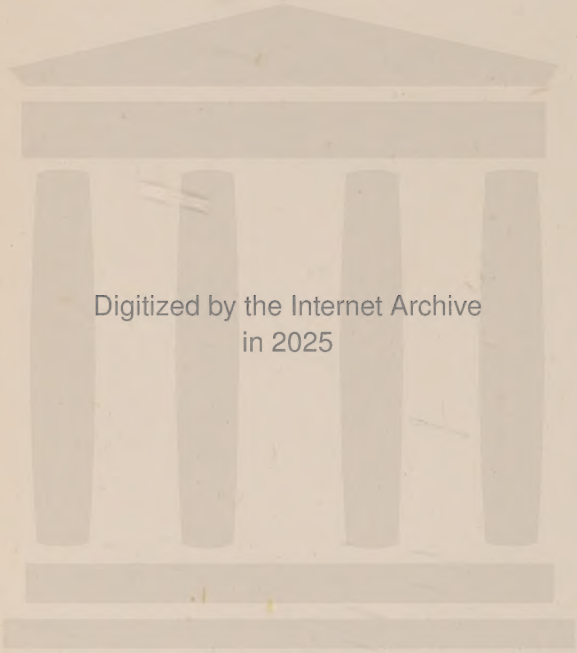

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AND
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BRITAIN AND GREATER BRITAIN IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY

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PREFACE

WHEN the Syndics of the University Press invited me to write a History of Great Britain in the Nineteenth Century, they explained that the book should be suitable for the general public, as well as for the upper forms of schools. If, therefore, I am charged with sins of omission, my defence must be that I have not set out to write a text-book for examination candidates.

I have inserted no maps—not because I underestimate the influence of geography upon history, but because any good atlas will be found suitable for use with this book.

I should like to express my deep obligation to the Head of my Department, Mr H. W. Hodges, who has read the whole book, both in manuscript and in proof, and who has left hardly a page unimproved by his criticisms. I must also thank Mr D. F. Ferguson, of Dartmouth, for his help in the preparation of the MS. and Index. The dates have been revised by Cadet A. V. Walker, R.N.

E. A. H.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE,
DARTMOUTH,
May, 1919.

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PART I

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

INTRODUCTORY

HISTORY is so vast a subject that it is necessary to divide it up into sections for study. The historian may limit himself to a particular period, or a particular country, or a particular aspect of human activity. He must be on his guard, however, against the danger of separating his special subject from general history. Human life is continuous and organic. Every period has a vital connection with the one immediately preceding and the one immediately following it. There have been few periods of change so rapid and violent as to make men feel that the world into which they had been born was passing away, and that all the old landmarks were being uprooted. As a general rule, the changes recorded by history are gradual, like the cycle of the seasons or the incoming of the tide.

But just as the seasons differ in character, though they shade imperceptibly into one another, so great periods of history are seen to possess dominant characteristics. It is these broad principles which give unity to a multitude of apparently disconnected facts. Thus in 17th century England the great question at issue was whether the king should rule as a despot, or whether his power should be limited by Parliament. From this standpoint the 17th century ends with the expulsion of James II in 1688; though the relations between a constitutional king and his ministers still remained to be defined. In the 18th century the main interest shifts from domestic to foreign affairs. The 17th century had witnessed the beginnings of English colonial activity, but only as a side issue. The keynote of the 18th century is the colonial rivalry between England and France. The true nature of this contest was often obscured: in one war England seemed to be fighting to avenge the wrongs of Maria Theresa; in the next, she was allied with Frederick the

Great against her. But in the seven wars in which England took part between 1688 and 1815, her real opponent was France, the prize was the empire of the world, and the weapon was sea-power. The last phase of the contest was also the most bitter: England was forced to concentrate all her attention on the life-and-death struggle against Napoleon, and to ignore everything else. It was not until his downfall at Waterloo that she could turn at last to those issues which were to occupy her during the 19th century. The year 1815 may thus be regarded as the beginning of 19th century English history.

Perhaps the most important question which demanded solution was imperial, and was the resultant of the history of the 17th and 18th centuries. The problem was how to extend to the empire won in the 18th century the self-government which England had gained for herself in the 17th; otherwise, the loss of our American colonies must be regarded as illustrating the normal development of a typical colony. It was so regarded by most English statesmen of both parties during the first half of the century. They felt too strongly the burden of empire, and longed for the inevitable time when the colonies would sever their connection with the mother country. But this was only a passing phase, and the 19th century was destined to lay the foundations of a solid colonial system.

After playing a leading part in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, and in the settlement of Europe at Vienna, England continued to take a keen interest in Continental affairs. As the century wore on, however, her statesmen became less concerned with the balance of power in Europe. Knowing that the empire meant peace, and trusting in its capacity to defend itself, they regarded alliances with foreign powers as unnecessary entanglements. The dangers of this policy of "splendid isolation" were clearly seen during the South African War, when England was left without a friend in the world. Hence came the understanding with France and Russia, and the alliance with Japan.

In the domestic history of England in the 19th century there are many threads of development.

First we may take the growth of democracy. The power lost by the monarchy in the 17th century had been gained by the aristocracy. In 1815 the House of Commons was controlled by the House of Lords. But political rights were gradually extended until by the end of the century practically every adult male possessed the franchise. As a corollary of this process, the century saw the abolition of laws which imposed civil or educational disabilities on those who could not subscribe to a particular religious creed.

Next we may consider the progress of the Industrial Revolution. This movement, which had begun in the 18th century, was to gather momentum in the 19th, altering the appearance of the country, the elements of national prosperity, the habits, and even the character, of the people. At first Parliament, under the influence of the *laissez faire* economists, made no attempt to control these changes. But later in the century, it found itself obliged in the national interest to interfere more frequently with individual rights, until state action and supervision had penetrated into almost every sphere of life.

Another marked characteristic of the century has been the increased importance of natural science. The discoveries of scientists have revolutionised not only modern industry, but modern thought. Religion, politics, history, and the other branches of social knowledge have adopted scientific methods and ideas. The 19th century has been essentially a scientific age.

Finally we may notice the influence of Ireland upon English politics. In the 18th century, when English dependencies were governed almost entirely in the interests of the mother country, Ireland was treated as a colony. In 1782, as a result of the American War, the Irish Parliament in Dublin was made independent of that of Great Britain, and the Crown was left as the only link between the two islands. But as Roman Catholics

were excluded from Parliament, the government was entirely in the hands of the Protestant minority. The ministry, moreover, was responsible to the English Parliament. Popular discontent produced the Rebellion of 1798, which convinced Pitt that a closer connection was necessary. He accordingly brought about a Parliamentary union in 1800, intending to complete the work by placing Roman Catholics on an equality with Protestants. His plans, however, were frustrated by the determined opposition of George III, and in 1815 Catholic Emancipation was still the most urgent need of Ireland. When this question was settled, others arose, and Irish affairs were the rock on which many 19th century cabinets were wrecked.

CHAPTER I

ENGLAND FROM WATERLOO TO THE GREAT REFORM BILL

THE reputation of England has never stood higher than at the signature of the Treaty of Vienna in 1815. She had played a leading part in the struggle against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Her fleets had kept the sea clear for her own merchant ships and transports, and had closed it to those of her enemies. Her army had won laurels in the Peninsula and at Waterloo. Her subsidies had enabled her allies to take the field. She, alone of the great countries of Europe, was never invaded by Napoleon. Even when he struck down her allies, she was able to conduct the war single-handed. The moral effect of this determined resistance is hard to exaggerate. While the nations of the Continent groaned under Napoleon's rule, they derived fresh hope from the knowledge that one country was still unsubdued. England, as Pitt had anticipated, saved herself by her exertions, and helped to save Europe by her example.

Towards the end, the contest had become one of endurance. But for the resources developed by the Industrial Revolution, England could never have supported the burden. At the beginning of the 18th century England was a nation of farmers, exporting corn and wool. Her maritime trade was flourishing; but her manufactures were on a small scale. A series of inventions completely altered her economic life, and changed her from a farm into a workshop.

When the century opened, all processes in the textile trades—teasing and carding, spinning, weaving, and printing—were done by hand. Before its close, machines had been invented which could perform all these functions. At first the new machines

were driven by water-power; later, the perfection of the steam engine by Watt supplied them with a constant and dependable motive power.

The introduction of machinery on an extensive scale resulted in a great demand for iron, which could not have been met at the beginning of the century. The use of charcoal in the manufacture of iron was rapidly exhausting our forests, and the government had to intervene in order to ensure a sufficient supply of timber for the navy. In 1735 a process was invented for converting coal into coke, which replaced charcoal for smelting. In 1760 blast furnaces were built in which coal was burnt, and in 1790 the steam engine was used to give a more powerful and continuous blast. This was a great economy; for "a seam of coal two feet thick and an acre in extent will supply as much energy as could be obtained by burning all the trees that could be grown in the same sized piece of land for 10,000 years." Iron became so cheap that it was used for purposes hitherto undreamt of, such as the building of bridges. The age of iron had begun.

The improvements in manufacture would have been of little use, if better means of communication had not enabled manufacturers to transport their wares cheaply and easily. Before this period all big towns had grown on or near navigable rivers. The roads were beneath contempt. Their gradients were sharp and their surface was execrable. Coaches often stuck up to their axles in the ruts, and had to be extricated by teams of oxen. At the beginning of the century Queen Anne took six hours to cover the last nine miles of a journey to Petworth. When coal was taken from the Duke of Bridgewater's colliery at Worsley to the centre of Manchester, five miles away, the cost of carriage doubled its price to the consumer. James Brindley, the Duke's steward, constructed a canal between the two places, thus making the cost of carriage negligible, and enabling coal to be sold in Manchester at half its former price. Encouraged by this success, the Duke entrusted Brindley with the construction of other canals, and his example was generally followed.

At the very beginning of the 19th century Telford constructed grand-trunk roads which were admirably engineered, and Macadam's method of making an even and durable surface added a new word to the language. Lighter coaches and faster horses could be used on these roads, and a speed of eleven or twelve miles an hour could be maintained. The number of stage coaches doubled between 1812 and 1825. The journey by coach from London to Holyhead took 45½ hours in 1810, and 27 hours in 1836. In 1848 the mail train took 22 hours; it now takes 6 hrs. 20 mins.

The Industrial Revolution was to broaden and deepen during the 19th century; but some of its most important results were already clear in 1815.

The use of machinery and the division of labour effected an economy in time and labour, so that goods became cheaper. Hargreaves' spinning jenny saved 750 per cent. on the spinning wheel. The diminished cost of manufactured articles led to a larger sale. In the century before Waterloo, the Yorkshire woollen trade expanded ten-fold, the cotton trade over fifty-fold, and other branches of industry to a greater or less extent. The national revenue rose from less than £5,000,000 to £72,210,000. The population, which had been almost stationary for centuries, grew rapidly. Liverpool was ten times as big in 1760 as in 1700. Manchester, Bradford, and Glasgow increased 75 per cent. in the first two decades of the 19th century. At the very beginning of the movement the new factories were built in hilly districts, where there was abundant water-power. After the introduction of the steam engine they grew up on the coalfields. Thus the south and east of England declined in prosperity; while the north, which had previously been semi-barbarous and the home of lost causes, became the industrial centre of the country. The new towns could not have been fed, had it not been for the better means of communication.

While the Industrial Revolution added to the wealth and power of the country, it had bad results as well. It brought about

a cleavage between industrial and agricultural life. Hitherto the weaver had lived in a village, and had usually possessed a few acres of land, with perhaps a cow and a couple of pigs. When trade was slack, he could devote most of his attention to the land; and when the weather was bad, he could sit at his loom. Now, the cottager could not compete with machinery, and the factory hand was divorced from the soil.

The transition from the old system to the new involved much temporary hardship. In the textile trades, for example, machinery affected spinning before weaving. It had previously taken from six to eight people to prepare and spin yarn for one weaver, who often had to waste much time going round and collecting it. Spinning had been the most important rural industry. In the long winter evenings the cottager's women-folk, and possibly his aged father, could each earn from one to three shillings a week at the spinning wheel. But the spinning jenny with its dozen spindles soon made the spinning wheel a thing of the past, and deprived the rural population of an important addition to their incomes. The weavers at first profited by the new inventions, as they were now provided with as much yarn as they could use. Until about 1815 they enjoyed great prosperity. The power-loom had been invented a generation before; but it was only slowly coming into use. In the ten years after Waterloo, however, the number of power-looms increased from about 4,000 to 30,000. There were still a quarter of a million hand-weavers; but they were reduced to the most pitiable distress.

Though the misery of the hand-workers driven out by machinery was intense, the expansion of our industries finally absorbed most of the unemployed labour. A more fundamental evil of the Industrial Revolution was the dependence of the country upon the uncertain factor of trade, instead of the solid basis of land. The 19th century was to experience a series of financial crises, due to over-speculation after a period of good trade. These disasters recurred at curiously regular intervals, ruining capitalists and throwing artisans out of work. English

trade and industry, moreover, were now liable to be disorganised by events in all quarters of the world. A revolution in France, civil war in America, an eruption in Italy, or a drought in Australia might deprive us for the time of the raw material for our industries or a market for our manufactures.

The bad effects of the Industrial Revolution were the more noticeable because the new factories were not supervised by the state. As a result, most Englishmen worked under abominable conditions, and lived in squalid and insanitary homes. These evils were only remedied when it became clear that the national stock was in danger of serious deterioration.

Side by side with the Industrial Revolution, important changes had taken place in rural England. At the beginning of the 18th century, agriculture was conducted on the open-field system, which had persisted since the Middle Ages. The typical English village was a long street in the middle of two or three large fields, which were enclosed by temporary fences, and divided into acre or half-acre strips. The land of each occupier was composed of a number of these strips, in different parts of the fields. One field lay fallow each year, and the others were cultivated. The hay from the village meadow was distributed in proportion to the number of strips each villager possessed in the arable fields. All occupiers of land had rights of pasture on the village waste, and on the stubble in the fields after the harvest. In most cases the squire had a compact field, which had been carved out of the waste, in addition to his strips. Some of the occupiers were freeholders; others were copyholders, paying a fixed rent for a term of lives; and a few were tenants at will.

The Revolution of 1688 gave a monopoly of power to the landed aristocracy, which composed both Houses of Parliament, and could make laws in its own interest. It became the steady policy of most country gentlemen to depress the legal status of freeholders and copyholders by converting them into leaseholders.

In the course of the 18th century many improvements were introduced into English farming. The importation of roots, such as turnips, led to the rotation of crops, which gave the land a rest without the waste of the fallow system. Many peers and gentlemen became interested in drainage, manures, seeds, and improved stock-breeding. George III wrote articles for the *Annals of Agriculture*, and was known as "Farmer George". The open-field system, however, was a serious obstacle to improvement, and the practice began of "enclosing" villages, i.e. of redistributing the land in the form of compact holdings. Between 1750 and 1850 nearly all the villages in England were thus treated.

These enclosures made it easier for an enterprising landlord to carry out improvements in drainage or breeding, and the land became more productive under the new scientific farming. The factory towns provided the market, and rents often doubled or even trebled.

There was, however, another side to the picture. The small freeholder's savings went in paying his share of the legal expenses of the enclosure, and in hedging and ditching his new farm. He did not possess the capital to drain and manure his land properly, and to buy pedigree cattle. Farming was becoming a trade, dependent on the fluctuations of the market, and he could not afford to wait until prices were at their highest. His wife and daughters could no longer earn anything by spinning. The manner in which the Poor Law was administered made him contribute to the expenses of the capitalist farmer, who employed hired labour (see p. 29). On the top of all this, the peace was followed by twenty years of agricultural depression, at the end of which the English yeomen, who had long formed the backbone of our armies, had ceased to exist. Some had sunk to the position of agricultural labourers, some had drifted to the factory towns, and a few had been able to join the ranks of the new capitalist farmers, who rented their land and buildings from a landlord. By the thirties it was rare to find a cultivator of the soil who had any rights over it.

One would naturally expect to find that the evils of transition to the capitalist system in industry and agriculture were increased by a quarter of a century of war. There is no doubt, however, that the country gained in prosperity between 1793 and 1815. The population of the United Kingdom rose from 14,000,000 to 19,000,000, the exports from £18,300,000 to £58,600,000, while taxes which in 1792 produced £20,000,000, in 1815 produced £45,000,000.

Englishmen naturally thought that peace would bring still greater prosperity, but their hopes were sadly disappointed. During the war English manufacturers and traders had enjoyed special advantages; for England was the only country in which it was safe to build factories, and only English ships were safe at sea throughout the period. But the war had diverted English capital from channels which were profitable into channels in which, from a purely economic standpoint, it was wasted. The national debt was larger by £600,000,000, though much had been spent on the war out of revenue. This money had not been used in the production of further wealth, but had been spent on the army and navy, which protected the national resources without adding to them. At the time this fact was obscured, because most of the expenditure was on munitions and military equipment, and thus employed British labour. Even the subsidies to foreign powers were really spent on English manufactures. When peace was made, governments no longer had to renew their military stores continually, and were anxious to practise retrenchment. Trades which were dependent on the war suffered immediately on the removal of this artificial stimulus. The smaller demand for iron, for instance, caused its price to fall from £20 to £8 a ton. Ironmasters were forced to shut down some of their furnaces and to dismiss some of their men. This in turn led to a depression in the coal trade.

Many English manufacturers had accumulated large stocks for exportation when the ports of the Continent should be reopened at the peace. But these goods were shipped in such

quantities that the market was glutted, and they had to be sold for ridiculously low prices. In consequence, manufacturers had to curtail production and make their employees work short time. It was when trade was thus stagnant and work hard to find that thousands of men were discharged from the services to seek employment in civil life.

The general depression was aggravated by the state of the currency. In 1797 the notes of the Bank of England had been made inconvertible, i.e. the Bank no longer guaranteed to exchange them for gold. These notes were issued in such numbers that their value depreciated. In addition, the value of gold fluctuated considerably at this period. From these and other causes a £5 note was worth £3. 10*s.* 0*d.* in gold in 1813, and £4. 6*s.* 0*d.* in 1815. These variations in the currency caused as much inconvenience to trade as if a yard were to contain 35 inches at one time, and 43 at another. Altogether, there was much in the condition of England to fill its rulers with concern.

The king of England in 1815 was George III, who had ascended the throne in 1760. He was now deaf, blind, and insane; and his death in 1820 made no real difference to the government of the country. The Prince Regent, who became George IV on his father's death, was handsome and accomplished, and could make himself very agreeable to anyone whom he wished to impress. But he was selfish, unscrupulous, and dissipated, and has been called a bad son, a bad husband, a bad father, a bad subject, a bad monarch, and a bad friend.

The Tories were supreme in Parliament under Lord Liverpool, who had been Prime Minister since 1812, and who retained his office until his fatal illness in 1827. The Whigs, disorganised and divided into groups, were for the time powerless. On the question of the war the Tories had been unanimous; but two groups began to form when internal affairs came to the front. There were those who saw that reform was needed in many departments of the administration, and those who held that the only constitution in Europe which had proved equal to the strain

of the Napoleonic Age could not possibly be improved, and ought to be preserved exactly as it stood. Until 1822 this second group was predominant in the ministry, and in 1818 it received the aid of Wellington, who returned from France in that year. From 1822 to 1827 the more liberal section of the party was able to make its influence felt.

In the first period the minister who was responsible for the policy of the government was Lord Castlereagh, the Foreign Secretary. He represented England at the Congress of Vienna, where he was treated as an equal by kings and emperors. On his return he steadily opposed all demands for reform. Many of his contemporaries thought that his intercourse with foreign despots had taught him to despise the lower orders. This view is unjust. What Europe needed most urgently was peace, and peace could be preserved only if England acted in harmony with foreign states. Continental rulers and statesmen had a natural horror of revolutionary tendencies, and Castlereagh thought that if he permitted even a moderate degree of reform they would regard him with suspicion. He did not undervalue the rights of peoples and of individuals; but he thought them less important at that time than the maintenance of the peace which had been so hardly won.

There was one feature of the national distress which a Parliament of landowners would wish to remedy. Agriculture had prospered exceedingly until 1814, owing to the new improvements, the growth of population, the large purchases of the government for the services, and the disturbed state of the Continent. The average price of corn for the four years ending May 1813 was 105*s.* 5*d.* a quarter, but it dropped to 60*s.* 8*d.* in February 1815. Rents had been fixed on the basis of high prices, and many landlords had borrowed money for improvements on the security of high rents. The agricultural interest was threatened with ruin, and in May 1815 the government introduced a bill prohibiting the importation of wheat under 80*s.* a quarter. It was argued that most of the taxation fell on

land, and that the country should be self-sufficing in food. But agriculture was no longer the chief occupation of England, and dear food meant misery to the industrial population. For three weeks it rained petitions against the bill: 40,000 signatures were obtained in London on a single Saturday. The country, apart from the land-owning class, was strongly opposed to the measure; but the land-owning class was supreme in Parliament, and it became law. Even this act did not avert twenty years of agricultural depression. In 1816 the distress was such that many farmers gave up their farms, and agricultural labourers in some parts of the country could only earn 6*d.* a day.

Though it is hard to see what steps the government could have taken to alleviate the general misery, the working classes were annoyed to find that it took none. They accordingly lent a ready ear to Radical orators, who told them that nothing would be done for them until they were represented in Parliament. For this purpose vast meetings were held, which the government put down by military force. Acts were passed to prohibit public meetings, even for the purpose of hearing scientific lectures, unless sanctioned by the justices of the peace. The power of the authorities to suppress disorder was strengthened by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. These measures drove discontent underground, and produced the quiet of despair. This is one of the gloomiest periods in English history. The cabinet were right in taking firm steps to restore order, but wrong in remaining blind to the causes which produced disorder. In applying coercion without remedial measures they were treating the symptoms instead of the disease.

A more hopeful period began with the appointment of Peel as Home Secretary and of Canning as Foreign Secretary on the death of Castlereagh in 1822. These men were moderate Tories, who were not disposed to tolerate abuses merely because they were of long standing.

Robert Peel was the eldest son of a rich cotton-spinner, whose zealous support of Tory principles had been rewarded

by a baronetcy. The first Sir Robert Peel had determined to make a statesman of his heir, who showed great promise at an early age. After a brilliant career at Harrow and Christ Church he had entered Parliament, and in 1812 had been made Chief Secretary for Ireland. Resigning this post in 1818, he had become chairman of a secret committee of the House on the paper currency. His prejudices were in favour of inconvertible bank-notes; but his mind was singularly open to argument, and the evidence brought before the committee persuaded him that a resumption of cash payments was essential. He succeeded in convincing the whole House of the necessity of this step, and thus rendered a great service to the country by giving it a good circulating medium.

During his tenure of the Home Office Peel devoted himself to the reform of the criminal code. There were 223 capital offences, of which only 67 dated back to the accession of George I. These included such crimes as cutting down a tree, impersonating a Greenwich pensioner, and stealing an article worth five shillings. The very severity of the law made it ineffective, for juries often refused to convict prisoners who were obviously guilty of trifling offences. In 1819 there were 14,254 trials, 9,510 convictions, 1,314 death sentences, and only 108 executions. Peel took away the death penalty from a hundred offences, and thus made the law at once more merciful and more effective.

At this time there was no police system worthy of the name. The London parishes and some of the larger towns kept watchmen, who were supposed to prevent or detect crime. Many of them were decrepit, and some received no pay, but were encouraged by the offer of rewards for the detection of certain heinous crimes. It was a common practice for these men to allow youths to commit small offences with impunity, and to keep them under observation in the hope that they would sooner or later be guilty of a crime worthy of blood-money. Cases were even known in which the lives of innocent men

were sworn away for the sake of the reward. In place of this corrupt and useless system Peel established the London Police, on the lines of the splendid force he had already instituted in Ireland. There they had been nicknamed "Bobbies" and "Peelers", and these names soon spread to England. In 1839 the police system was made optional, and in 1856 compulsory, for the whole country.

When Peel began his reforms, the gaols were squalid and insanitary dens in which prisoners of all ages and both sexes were huddled together so closely that in some cases they had to lie edgeways. Here might be seen the hardened criminal, the first offender, the debtor, and the innocent man who was merely awaiting trial. The gaolers were often drawn from the ranks of the prisoners themselves, and, not being paid for their work, exacted what they could for the barest necessaries of life. To Peel belongs the credit of having introduced some order and decency into this chaos, though he unfortunately allowed the system of transportation to remain unreformed.

George Canning was one of the most brilliant men in the Tory party, but he had been on bad terms with Castlereagh, with whom he had fought a duel. On the latter's death Liverpool felt that the ministry was too weak and unpopular to withstand the growing pressure from the Whigs, and he offered places in the administration to Canning and some of his friends. For the next five years Canning was almost dictator of England, but his own work lay mainly in the region of foreign politics. He gave his support, however, to Huskisson, who had been made President of the Board of Trade.

Huskisson was no Free Trader, but he lowered and simplified many of the customs duties, particularly those on raw materials. He next modified the Navigation Acts. These famous laws, passed by the Commonwealth, and renewed and amplified by succeeding governments, aimed at giving a monopoly of the carrying trade with foreign countries to English ships. They had undoubtedly fostered our merchant shipping,

but other countries were now beginning to pass Navigation Acts of their own. Huskisson accordingly passed a Reciprocity Act, giving the king in council the right of making a treaty with any country, allowing the ships of each country to use the ports of the other (1825). This act was received with great joy in the colonies, which had often suffered from the monopoly hitherto possessed by English ship-owners.

In 1824 the government was persuaded to repeal the Combination Act of 1800, which imposed severe penalties on all who combined to raise wages or to diminish output. The strikes which immediately broke out forced Parliament to declare violence and intimidation illegal, but it had the courage to allow a limited right of combination. Masters had previously been tacitly allowed to form associations for fixing prices and wages, and the working classes no longer smarted under a sense of injustice.

The period of Tory reform was cut short in February 1827, when Lord Liverpool was seized with an apoplectic fit, from which he never recovered sufficiently even to resign. He was not a man of great ability; but he had possessed enough tact to keep together a cabinet which contained very diverse elements. His death broke up not only the administration but the party. Canning became Prime Minister, but he lost the support of many of Liverpool's subordinates, particularly Wellington, who mistrusted his sincerity, and Peel, who was opposed to Catholic Emancipation. Canning was already in poor health, and the struggle against his former colleagues proved too much for him. He died in August 1827, at the height of his reputation. His championship of liberal ideas abroad and of religious equality at home gave him a deserved fame. But he was in favour of administrative, not electoral reform. Like the benevolent despots of the 18th century, he believed in government for the people, but not by the people. Had he lived longer, he would have stood out as the strongest opponent of Parliamentary reform, and would have lost his early popularity.

For a short time after the death of their leader the Canningites served under Wellington, the new Prime Minister; but they soon left him and joined the Whigs. Though Wellington and Peel had repeatedly declared their determination to resist the demands of the Catholics, the course of events was too strong for them. O'Connell had formed the Catholic Association, and in 1828 he challenged the government by standing for County Clare and defeating the ministerial candidate, though he knew he would not be allowed to take his seat (see p. 95). The disturbed state of Ireland persuaded Peel that only the grant of Catholic Emancipation could avert civil war, and he sent Wellington his resignation. His arguments converted Wellington. But, if Emancipation was necessary, only a Tory government could hope to force it on a reluctant king and House of Lords; so Wellington begged Peel to reconsider his resignation. Sacrificing his reputation for consistency to his sense of duty, Peel consented. At the last moment George IV was troubled by what he called his conscience, and summoned the cabinet with the object of stopping the bill. "The king talked wildly for six hours, refreshing himself with brandy as he proceeded." The ministers resigned, and the king was forced to recall them in the evening. The Catholics were relieved of their disabilities; but the Tories felt that they had been deceived, and shook their fists at Peel when he defended his change of front.

On June 26th, 1830, George IV died, mourned by none. He was succeeded by his brother, William IV, who was garrulous, eccentric, and weak-minded. The more solemn the occasion, the more childishly he behaved. But he was good-natured, and was not without a queer sense of duty. He had spent his early life in the Navy, and was therefore popular as a "Sailor King". His accession weakened the position of the cabinet, as he was understood to lean towards the Whigs. The government was further embarrassed by the French Revolution of July, which dethroned Charles X. His chief adviser,

Polignac, had been on fairly intimate terms with Wellington, who was regarded by all Continental Conservatives as an ally. The government had lost the progressive Tories after the death of Canning, and had incurred the dislike of the high Tories by surrender to the Catholics. They lost fifty seats at the general election necessitated by the accession of William IV, and now had to face a serious demand for Parliamentary reform.

The basis of our representative system had been laid by Edward I, who had summoned two representatives from each county, and two each from certain towns, chosen on account of their importance. No fresh constituencies were created after the Revolution of 1688. Since then the Industrial Revolution had shifted the centre of gravity of the country. Flourishing towns had decayed, and hamlets had grown into vast industrial centres. There had been a migration of population from the south to the north. Of these changes the representative system had taken no notice. More than half the Parliamentary boroughs were in the maritime counties between the Wash and the Severn, and half of these were on the tideway. A third of the members of the House of Commons were returned by constituencies with less than a hundred electors each. Fifty constituencies had no electors at all. Lord John Russell was speaking sober truth when he said that members were sent to Parliament by a green mound, or by a stone wall with three niches in it. The borough of Dunwich, which had long ago disappeared beneath the North Sea, was still represented in the House of Commons. On the other hand a factory town like Manchester, with a population of 200,000, sent no members to Parliament.

The franchise bore as little relation to the needs of the time as did the constituencies. In the counties the vote was given to owners of freehold land worth 40*s.* a year. But the yeomen who had cultivated their own freeholds had disappeared during the Agrarian Revolution, and the new capitalist farmers who leased their land had no vote. The county franchise had at

least the advantage of uniformity; not so the franchise in boroughs. In some, those could vote who resided within the ancient limits of the borough as it had been in the time of Edward I; in others, those who paid "scot and lot", or rates; in others, all "pot-wallopers"[1], who had a hearth where they could cook their meals. In most boroughs, however, the representatives were chosen either by the corporation, or by the freemen.

As a result of these anomalies there were only 160,000 electors in the British Isles. Cornwall returned 44 M.P.s, the whole of Scotland 45. The county of Bute had a population of 14,000, and only 21 electors, of whom 20 lived outside the county. At one election, owing to a snow-storm, only the resident elector attended the meeting, in addition to the sheriff and the returning officer. "He, of course, took the chair, constituted the meeting, called over the roll of freeholders, answered to his own name, took the vote as to the preses, and elected himself. He then moved and seconded his own nomination, put the question to the vote, and was unanimously elected."

The natural result of the restricted franchise was corruption. Over £200,000 was spent at the election for Yorkshire in 1807. The member who had bribed his way into Parliament expected to be paid for his vote. He might be given a pension or a title, or his son might be promoted in the Army, the Navy, or the Church. Some of the peers had "pocket" boroughs on their estates; others speculated in "rotten" boroughs. More than two-thirds of the members of the House in 1816 were nominees, and of these half owed their seats to patrons in the House of Lords. This explains why the system lasted so long: the only men who could abolish it were those who profited by it.

Towards the end of the 18th century attempts had been made to remedy these defects; but the French Revolution filled most Englishmen with a horror of democratic opinions, and during the great war there was no time for domestic reform. After the downfall of Napoleon the question again began to be

[1] = "pot-boilers".

considered by responsible statesmen, and after 1821 it was supported by most of the Whigs. In the new Parliament of November 1830 Earl Grey asked Wellington if he meant to bring in a measure of Parliamentary reform. In disclaiming any such intention the Duke used these words: "If at the present moment I had imposed upon me the duty of forming a legislature for any country, and particularly for a country like this, in possession of great property of various descriptions, I do not mean to assert that I could form such a legislature as we possess now, for the nature of man is incapable of reaching such excellence at once; but my great endeavour would be, to form some description of legislature which would produce the same results."

This speech aroused a storm of popular resentment, and a fortnight later Wellington was beaten in a division on the civil list, and handed in his resignation. His fall marks the end of two generations of practically unbroken Tory rule. The king sent for Grey, who told him that he considered himself pledged to reform, and who was commissioned to form a cabinet on that understanding. He was now 56 years of age, and for more than half his life had been the ardent champion of electoral reform. His high rank and known moderation might reassure those who dreaded revolutionary legislation. In addition, his cabinet was the most aristocratic of the century, including only four members of the House of Commons, and those of high birth.

A committee of the government drew up a bill which was revised by the cabinet, and on March 1st, 1831, Lord John Russell introduced it before a crowded House. He summed up the position of the Reformers in the words, "Our ancestors gave Old Sarum representatives because it *was* a large town; therefore we give members to Manchester, which *is* a large town." The bill proposed to take away 167 members from small boroughs, and to transfer 105 of them to large towns and English counties, thus leaving 62 less seats in the House. In

boroughs the franchise was to be extended to occupiers of houses rated at £10 a year, and in counties to £10 copyholders and to occupiers, as well as leaseholders, of lands worth £50 a year. The Tories objected so strongly to the bill that they took the unusual step of prolonging the debate on the first reading over seven nights, before they allowed it to be carried without a division, according to custom. The first real trial of strength was the division on the second reading. Three hundred and two members voted for the bill. "We were all breathless with anxiety," wrote Macaulay, "when Charles Wood, who stood near the door, jumped up on a bench and cried out 'They are only three hundred and one.' We set up a shout that you might have heard to Charing Cross, waving our hats, stamping against the floor, and clapping our hands...You might have heard a pin drop as Duncannon read the numbers. Then again the shouts broke out, and many of us shed tears. I could scarcely refrain. And the jaw of Peel fell; and the face of Twiss was as the face of a damned soul; and Herries looked like Judas taking his necktie off for the last operation." After such a narrow victory it was not surprising that the government were beaten on the motion to go into committee. The king was persuaded to come and dissolve Parliament, after a scene of indescribable disorder in the Lords.

The Whigs were surprised at the strength of popular feeling on their side. Trade and agriculture were in a state of great depression. The last two harvests had been failures. In Sussex labourers were glad to work on the roads for 3*d.* or 4*d.* a day. Many people in Lancashire earned only 2*d.* a day. The general distress made the working classes look to Parliamentary reform as a panacea for their troubles. The Reform Bill was so much bolder than anyone had expected that even extreme Radicals accepted it as an instalment. The bloodless revolution in France had its effect in this country. The attitude of the crowd at elections was so unmistakable that borough-mongers dared not do as they liked with their own.

The Whigs came back with a majority of over a hundred, and in spite of Tory obstruction the bill passed through all its stages in the Commons. But though the Lord Chancellor went down on his knees and entreated the peers to accept it (he had been imbibing mulled port), they rejected it after a week's debate. The *Sun* and the *Chronicle* appeared in deep mourning. Muffled tolls were rung in the churches of Birmingham. The Marquis of Londonderry was attacked by the mob in London, and Lord Tankerville at Darlington. Nottingham Castle was burnt down. The rioters at Bristol burnt the Mansion House and the Bishop's palace, and were only quelled by a cavalry charge. Six of their number perished in the flames, two were shot dead, two died of sword cuts, and two of excessive drinking.

When Parliament reopened in December, Russell introduced his third Reform Bill, which disfranchised fewer boroughs than the others, and provided for no diminution in the number of members. In March 1832 it was sent up to the Lords, where it passed its second reading. But the peers insisted on introducing amendments in committee, and Grey resigned. After a fruitless attempt on the part of Wellington to form a ministry, Grey was recalled with the king's promise to create enough peers to ensure the passage of the bill. Further resistance was hopeless, and Wellington persuaded a sufficient number of peers to stay away to allow the bill to pass. On June 7th it received the royal assent.

The results of the Reform Bill did not justify all the hopes of its supporters or all the fears of its opponents. A Tory M.P. had prophesied that a reformed House of Commons would, in ten years, depose the king and expel the Lords from their House; and a Tory peer had invested £500,000 in the United States against the evil day. But the Reform Bill was a middle-class, not a democratic, measure. The average artisan considered himself lucky if he had a room to himself and his family, and a house rated at £10 a year was beyond his wildest dreams.

At the hustings at Sunderland in 1845 ten thousand men held up their hands for Col. Thompson, and hardly any for his rival; but these did not enjoy the franchise, and he was beaten by 627 votes to 497. Only one man in 24 possessed the vote, and a majority of the House might represent only one-eighth of the electorate. Voting was still open, and there was still room for influence and pressure at elections. Extreme Radicals were bitterly conscious of the short-comings of the measure. They felt that the working class had overcome the resistance of the Lords, and that the middle class had run off with the spoils. The *Poor Man's Guardian* of August 17th, 1832, called the Reform Bill "a damnable delusion, giving us as many tyrants as there are shopkeepers....It was not enough that we were exposed for centuries to prowling oligarchs. These noble beasts of prey were too good for us...The lion must give place to the rat, and the tiger to the leech."

The Radicals should have reflected, however, that even this incomplete and unsystematic measure of reform had been passed only with the greatest difficulty, and that a more pretentious bill would undoubtedly have failed. As it was, a beginning had been made. The principle had been established that the constitution was not sacrosanct and immutable. The reformed House of Commons represented the country imperfectly; but it represented it infinitely better than the unreformed House. This change had an important effect on the position of the House of Lords, which henceforth only claimed the right of delaying legislation until the country had been given a chance of pronouncing its verdict on it. The House of Commons also altered in character. New men entered the House who were more concerned with the condition of England than with the affairs of foreign countries. Facts about trade and social conditions became more important than apt classical quotations. There were fewer opportunities for set speeches, and the orator gave way to the debater. The public never lost the interest in the proceedings of Parliament which it had displayed during

the passage of the Reform Bill. The publication of official division lists in 1836 tended to make members the delegates rather than the representatives of their constituents.

But these tendencies took time to make themselves felt. It was a generation before the middle class used the power which had been given it. The Reform Bill had been passed by the Whigs, and the Whigs were still an aristocratic party.

CHAPTER II

ENGLISH POLITICS FROM THE GREAT REFORM BILL TO THE OUTBREAK OF THE CRIMEAN WAR

THE general election held after the passage of the Reform Bill gave an overwhelming majority to Earl Grey. The new House of Commons contained 382 Whigs, 71 Radicals, 167 Tories, and 38 Repealers under O'Connell. It seemed that the fears of the Tories had been justified, and the balance of parties destroyed. It must be noticed, however, that the victors were divided among themselves. By the Radicals the Reform Bill was treated simply as a means to an end, as the necessary preliminary to reforms in all departments of the administration. Old-fashioned Whigs regarded it as a final settlement, and were well content with things as they were. The term "Liberal" now began to be used to include all shades of Whig and Radical opinion.

One of the most remarkable features of the reformed Parliament was the manner in which Peel soon regained control, not only over his own party, but over the whole House. In the debate on the address he declared that he would consider the question of reform as "finally and irrevocably disposed of. He was for reforming every institution that really required reform; but he was for doing it gradually, dispassionately, and deliberately, in order that the reform might be lasting." Peel realised that the old Toryism, with its indiscriminate hatred of everything new, was out of place in an age of change. Under his influence the Tory party became the Conservative party, and the change was more than one of name. The government often received valuable help in legislation from Peel in the Commons and from Wellington in the Lords.

One of the first great measures of the Whig government was the Poor Law Reform Act of 1834. The foundations of the English Poor Law system were laid in the reign of Elizabeth, when each parish was made responsible for its own poor. Work was to be found for the able-bodied, and the infirm were to be supported out of a poor rate levied by the churchwardens. At the beginning of the 18th century many towns built workhouses, to which all applicants for relief were sent. At the very end of the century the Berkshire magistrates came to an important decision. There was no doubt that the wages of the agricultural labourer were too small for him to support his family, at a time when a large population seemed essential to make up for the drain of the French wars. Instead of sending applicants for relief to the workhouse, the magistrates thought it would be cheaper and better to supplement their wages by grants from the poor rate. They accordingly drew up a table showing what sum of money a labourer ought to receive, in proportion to the number of his family, and varying with the price of corn; and if he received less from his employer, they made up the deficiency. This seemed such a common-sense plan that it was imitated throughout the country.

The results of this change of policy were disastrous. Employers were relieved of the necessity of paying their men a living wage. The lazy felt that it made no difference how hard they worked; since a fixed income was assured to them. The improvident raised large families at the public cost; while the self-respecting labourer who tried to do without relief could not marry. The state was encouraging breeding from the worst stock. The system was not only demoralising; it was ruinously expensive. It made the lot of the pauper easier than that of the independent labourer, with the natural result that the number of paupers and the amount of the poor rate increased to an alarming extent. The example most often quoted is that of Cholesbury, in Bucks, where the poor rate amounted to £10. 10*s.* 0*d.* in 1801, and £367, or 32*s.* in the pound, in 1832. In the latter year

104 of the 139 inhabitants of the parish were in receipt of relief. The number of paupers in the whole country nearly doubled in the first thirty years of the century. The financial burden led to remedies which were worse than the disease. Poor Law authorities often got rid of pauper children by apprenticing them at an early age to owners of factories in the north, where they were treated no better than slaves. The desire of each parish to keep its expenditure within limits led to the strict enforcement of Charles II's Act of Settlement, which enabled Poor Law officials to deport to his old parish any newcomer who might become a burden on the rates. This was a serious obstacle to the mobility of labour in an age when old centres of industry were decaying and new ones springing up.

It would be wrong to regard all these evils as the direct outcome of the changes in Poor Law administration. The root of the mischief was the depression of the agricultural labourer through the Agrarian Revolution. When a village was enclosed, the cottager frequently received no compensation for his right of grazing a cow or a couple of pigs on the common, of which he usually had no documentary proof. If he had possessed half a dozen strips in the common fields, he might be given instead a small field a couple of miles from his cottage, on condition that he planted a quickset hedge around it. In most cases he would be glad to sell it for what he could get, and would depend entirely on his wages. At a time when corn was dear these were miserably insufficient. The Poor Law authorities saved him from absolute starvation; but they did it in the worst possible way.

It is highly to the credit of Grey's administration that it resolved to grapple with this problem. It appointed a Commission in 1832, and brought in a bill founded on their report in 1834. One of the main weaknesses of the existing system was the absence of a central body with the powers of supervision which had been exercised by the Privy Council before the Civil War. The bill therefore appointed three Poor Law Commissioners, who were to form parishes into unions for the building

of workhouses, to draw up regulations for their management, and to examine their accounts. Boards of Guardians were to be elected for each union, and were to appoint paid administrative officials.

It will be seen that the working of the act depended entirely on the central Commissioners. The original three felt strongly that paupers should be distinctly worse off than independent labourers. Since they could not improve the condition of the latter, they had to depress the former. Dickens has painted the horrors of the new workhouse system. The Commissioners became terribly unpopular among the poor, who called them the "Three-Headed Devil King". But time has justified their work. They found a cancer eating into the body politic, and they realised that it could not be removed without using the knife. They may have cut too deeply; but that was better than leaving a trace of the disease behind. Their policy was the exact opposite of the previous one. Their benevolent sternness was infinitely wiser than the easy-going and short-sighted kindness of their predecessors. In the first three years of their administration they nearly halved the national poor rate, and this was the least of their achievements. Their powers were continued at intervals until 1847, when they were made permanent. Since 1871 their functions have been discharged by the Local Government Board.

By the time this act became law, Earl Grey had ceased to be Prime Minister. He was over seventy years of age, and had accomplished the great purpose of his life. The cabinet was hopelessly divided on the question of Ireland, and he did not feel equal to another great struggle. He was succeeded as Prime Minister by Lord Melbourne, who made a curious leader of a progressive party. A man of great ability and singular charm of manner, he took little interest in politics, reserving his real enthusiasm for literature. He was quite content to let sleeping dogs lie, and could not understand the passion of some of his followers for reform. He considered it hardly well-bred to show such feeling, and even when he was genuinely stirred, he con-

cealed his interest by an affectation of cynicism and flippancy. Save for two short intervals, he remained in office until 1841.

In 1835 the government passed a Municipal Corporations Act, based on the report of a Commission appointed in 1833. The Commissioners found that in most corporate towns certain families had acquired a monopoly of the government, since vacancies in the corporation were filled by co-optation. In other towns members of the corporation were elected by the freemen, who usually formed a small proportion of the inhabitants. At Portsmouth there were only 102 freemen out of a population of 46,000. In a few cases the constitution was democratic. The freemen enjoyed privileges which were not possessed by the rest of the townsfolk, such as exemption from tolls, and a share in charitable funds. A Newcastle merchant saved £400 a year in tolls on being made a freeman. The government of the town was entirely in the hands of the mayor and corporation. As they were irresponsible, they tended to consider their own interests rather than those of the community. Cases were frequent where municipal property was sold or leased to members of the corporation for absurdly low sums. Educational and charitable bequests were often misappropriated. There was no provision for the audit of accounts. Justice was administered by the mayor, who might be ignorant and corrupt. Many corporations refused to spend public money in establishing a police force or a drainage system.

The Act of 1835 established in 183 towns a mayor and town council, elected by all ratepayers. The new councils were made to take over the duties of lighting and police, which had in many towns been discharged by separate commissioners. They were allowed to levy rates for all local purposes, and their accounts were to be audited by the central government. Any town which was big enough to need a stipendiary magistrate could apply to the Crown, which would choose one from barristers of a certain standing.

The importance of this measure is hard to exaggerate. In

ordinary times, inefficiency and corruption are as harmful in local as in national government. The new system led to a remarkable growth of municipal activity, and furnished an administrative training to many Members of Parliament. It was the logical corollary of the Reform Bill.

On June 20th, 1837, William IV died. His successor was the Princess Victoria, only child of the Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III. Born on May 24th, 1819, she had been left fatherless in 1820; but her mother had watched over her education with the greatest care, and had given her a strict and simple training which was of the utmost value to her in after life.

By the Salic Law the throne of Hanover went to the nearest male heir, Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, the fifth son of George III, and a rough, bad, and overbearing man. The separation of England and Hanover was an advantage to the former, as was clearly seen in 1866, when she took little notice of the absorption of Hanover by Prussia.

The accession of a new sovereign was made the occasion for a revision of the civil list. The revenue of the Crown was now fixed at £385,000 a year, in addition to the duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall, which were then worth about £50,000 a year.

The accession of Victoria was important from another standpoint. For a generation personal loyalty had been impossible in England. The vices of George IV and the eccentricities of William IV had lowered the influence of the sovereign. The age, the sex, the dignity, and the personal appearance of the young Queen made a deep impression on her subjects, who thronged in vast numbers to her coronation in June 1838. Melbourne acted as her private secretary, and gave her an insight into the workings of English politics. His pretence of levity vanished before her earnestness and sense of duty, and he threw himself into his task with zeal. A warm friendship soon sprang up between them, which lasted until Melbourne's death.

In 1840 the Queen married Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. The prince, who was not given the title of Prince Consort until 1857, was handsome and well-educated. There was some dissatisfaction in the country at the Queen's choice of a petty German prince, and his rather stiff manners prevented him from ever becoming generally popular. His standpoint in politics, too, was that of the benevolent despot, and he never really understood English political life. As time went on, however, his quiet and intelligent patronage of art, science, and letters won him the respect of the few; while the many were delighted to find that he made a devoted husband and father. It was in private life that his good qualities emerged, and those who knew him best thought most highly of him.

By this time the Melbourne ministry was tottering to its fall. Since 1832 many important acts had been passed, which will be dealt with in the next chapter. Slavery had been abolished, the foundations of national education had been laid, the tithe question had been settled, factories had been regulated, and the penny post had been established. But these measures were the work of the age rather than of the ministry, and they had alienated many of the Whigs. The alliance between the government and O'Connell was disliked by most Englishmen. The Whigs had been remarkably unsuccessful in their foreign policy and their finance. They remained in office only because Peel was not yet ready to turn them out. In 1839 a Radical member said, "The right honourable member for Tamworth governs England; the honourable and learned member for Dublin governs Ireland; the Whigs govern nothing but Downing Street." At last in June 1841, Peel, finding that the ministry refused either to govern or to resign, moved and carried a direct vote of want of confidence. Melbourne appealed to the country, but the general election gave Peel a substantial majority.

The last four years of Melbourne's ministry—the first four of Queen Victoria's reign—saw the culmination of social distress in England. A series of bad harvests raised the price of the

quartern loaf to 1*s.* 2*d.* Agricultural labourers earned from 6*s.* to 9*s.* a week. At Rochdale 508 persons lived each on 1*s.* a week, 290 on 10*d.*, and 136 on 6*d.* A farthing herring and a half-pennyworth of potatoes had to serve as a meal for a family of seven. Few wage-earners could ever afford wheaten bread, most living mainly on potatoes and turnips. Some trades suffered from the practice known as truck, by which wages were paid in kind. A factory hand who had earned 35*s.* might be given a piece of cloth in payment which he could not sell for more than 11*s.* The immediate hardship of the new Poor Law was more apparent than its ultimate benefits. Disraeli truly said that the country contained two nations between whom there was no intercourse and no sympathy. Unless the condition of the working classes could be improved, a social war seemed inevitable.

The failure of the Whig government to do anything to solve the problem led to two movements, one political, the other economic. Artisans saw that the upper and middle classes, who alone had political rights, were well off, and they argued that if they could force them to share their power, they would also share their prosperity. In 1838 the London Working Men's Association drew up The People's Charter, demanding equal electoral districts, the payment of M.P.s, manhood suffrage, vote by ballot, annual Parliaments, and the abolition of the property qualification for M.P.s. These six points were advocated in the press, on the platform, and at torchlight meetings, and Chartism spread rapidly among working men. In 1839 the Chartists presented a petition to the Commons; but the House refused even to consider it. This was a bitter disappointment to thousands of law-abiding men who had thought that once their grievances were explained to Parliament they would be remedied. In their despair many joined the advocates of physical force. Riots broke out in many large towns, and the colliers of Monmouthshire marched in arms on Newport. They were opposed by a small body of troops, and retired after thirty of their number had been killed. Three of the ringleaders were transported, and no more

disturbances broke out. But Chartism lasted another nine years, and might have been serious in case of a foreign war.

The economic movement was directed towards the repeal of the Corn Laws. At this time the country was paying £12,000,000 a year in bread taxes alone, under the sliding scale which Wellington had substituted for the law of 1815. In 1838 some Lancashire manufacturers formed the Anti-Corn Law League, which they organised on business lines. Pamphlets were distributed, public meetings were held, and large sums were collected for the funds. A single bazaar brought in £20,000. Two members of the committee, Richard Cobden and John Bright, soon became the chief spokesmen of the League.

Cobden was the son of a Sussex yeoman, and became a partner in a Manchester cotton factory. He travelled on business to most European countries, the United States, Canada, and the East. On his travels he noticed carefully the effect of different fiscal systems on the standard of living of the working class. His observations convinced him of the bad effects of protection, and supplied him with a wealth of argument and illustration for the conversion of others.

John Bright was the son of a Quaker cotton-spinner of Rochdale. Until the age of thirty he assisted his father in the business, reading much in his spare time, and taking a great interest in politics. Then, after two years of happy wedded life, he lost his wife. This bereavement was the turning-point of his career. "Mr Cobden," he afterwards wrote, "called upon me as his friend, and addressed me with words of condolence. After a time he looked up and said, 'There are thousands of houses in England at this moment where wives, mothers, and children are dying of hunger. Now,' he said, 'when the first paroxysm of your grief is past, I would advise you to come with me, and we will never rest till the Corn Law is repealed.' I accepted his invitation."

The two men were perfectly fitted for their task. Cobden, who always spoke first, dealt with the economic side of the

question in a clear, persuasive, almost conversational style, illustrating his arguments with examples which the most ignorant could understand. His main point was that unless foreigners were allowed to send us their corn, they could not pay for our manufactures, and our trade necessarily languished. When Cobden had finished, Bright, as he himself put it, "used to get up and do a little prize-fighting." He had all the qualifications of a great orator—a commanding presence, a rich voice, which could fill the largest hall with ease, and a perfect command of the English language. And behind the orator there was the man, with his transparent honesty, his sturdy maintenance of what he believed to be right, and his whole-hearted denunciation of injustice. "This law-made famine," he thundered, "is unequal, sparing the rich and crushing the poor. Famine on board a ship would be equally borne by all. Admiral and cabin-boy would share the biscuits."

The Chartists denounced the League as another middle-class trick, like the Reform Bill. They declared that while representation of the workers would lead to the repeal of the Corn Laws, the converse would not hold good. After the Chartist failure of 1839, however, the League made steady progress. It was easy to persuade agricultural labourers that they could not be worse off under free trade than under protection. "I be protected," said a labourer, "and I be starving." Many farmers were brought to see that high prices meant high rents. Manufacturers needed no convincing.

The situation which confronted Peel on his accession to office in 1841 might well have discouraged any minister. England was at war with China and Afghanistan, and on bad terms with France and the United States. At home there was distress, agitation, and a falling revenue. On the other hand, Peel was able to command the services of a number of remarkably brilliant men, whom he was strong enough to keep under his absolute control. No Prime Minister has ever exercised such detailed supervision over all departments of state, and no Prime

Minister has been better fitted to exercise it. Peel was the Ministry.

The state of the finances first called for his attention. The Whigs had exhausted the old system of raising a revenue by means of the customs and excise. Duties were levied on 1,200 articles, and there were no more left to be taxed. "The schoolboy," said Sydney Smith, "whips his taxed top; the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed bridle on a taxed road. The dying Englishman, pouring his medicine which has paid 7 per cent. into a spoon which has paid 15 per cent., flings himself back on his chintz bed, which has paid 22 per cent., makes his will with an £8 stamp, and expires in the hands of an apothecary, who has paid a license of £100 for the privilege of putting him to death. His whole property is then immediately taxed from 2 to 10 per cent. Large fees are demanded for burying him in the chancel; his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble; and he is then gathered to his fathers—to be taxed no more."

When the Whigs had to face a deficit, the only policy they could think of was to increase these indirect taxes, with the natural result that fewer articles were bought, and the revenue diminished. When they were driven from office, they left a total deficit of £10,000,000.

Peel determined to try the effect of the opposite policy, and to lower the duties. "We must make this country a *cheap* country for living," he said. In his two great Budgets of 1842 and 1845 he abolished all the export duties, and the import duties on 430 articles. He lowered the customs on other imports so that the duties on raw materials should not exceed 5 per cent., those on partly manufactured articles 12 per cent., and those on finished articles 20 per cent. of their value. To carry out these reforms and wipe off the deficit he reintroduced the income tax, which had previously been regarded simply as a war tax, fixing it at 7*d.* in the pound. He also slightly lowered the duties on foreign corn.

The results of these changes were most gratifying. The reduction of the duties led to a great revival in trade, and benefited producers and consumers without harming the revenue. The trade of the country increased by 25 per cent. between 1842 and 1844. Though, in all, Peel remitted indirect taxes worth £8,200,000, the customs and excise produced only £50,000 less in 1847 than in 1842.

Peel's other great financial achievement was the Bank Charter Act of 1844. A severe financial crisis in England, followed by one in the United States, attracted the attention of statesmen to the functions of banks. The directors of the Bank of England had often acted unwisely in lending money too freely when trade was brisk, and then suddenly refusing their loans at the first rumour of a panic; with the result that merchants who could have met their liabilities with a little temporary assistance became bankrupt, dragging their creditors after them. Peel now divided the Bank of England into two departments. It was to carry on the ordinary business of a bank as before; but the department for the issue of notes was to be kept separate. £14,000,000 worth of notes might be kept in circulation on the security of the government's debt to the bank, and additional notes could only be issued to the amount of the bullion in the Bank's vaults. By establishing the Bank of England's right to issue notes upon a basis of currency and not of banking principles, this Act completed the work of the Act of 1819, and proved of great value in later crises.

The success of Peel's free trade policy was so marked that he was beginning to doubt whether he could any longer treat corn as an exception. His fairness of mind made him appreciate the arguments of Cobden and Bright, who were now in Parliament. Protection in corn was condemned by the leading political economists. He had decided that he could not defend the Corn Laws at another general election; but other questions seemed more pressing at the time, and he did not inform his followers of his altered views. The Conservatives, however, could not help

seeing the direction in which he was moving. They had viewed with alarm his abandonment of the principle of protection, which he had been returned to defend. They had objected to his increased grant to the Roman Catholic seminary at Maynooth. They remembered how he had surrendered to O'Connell, and they trembled lest he should betray them into the hands of Cobden and Bright. The relations between Peel and his party were thus becoming strained when, as Bright said, "Famine itself, against which we had warred, joined us."

After the prorogation of Parliament on August 7th, 1845, it rained steadily. By the middle of September it was plain that the potato crop, on which half the population of Ireland depended, would be a complete failure. As the English corn harvest was also ruined, Peel saw that the Corn Laws would have to be repealed, and that they could not be reimposed. Cobden and Bright seized their opportunity, and addressed huge meetings throughout the country. The subscriptions to the League this year amounted to £250,000. Peel summoned the cabinet to meet on October 31st, and tried to persuade it of the necessity of repeal. But the majority proved obdurate, and on December 5th he resigned. The Queen sent for Lord John Russell, who failed to form a ministry and "handed back with courtesy the poisoned chalice to Sir Robert." Out of loyalty to the Queen, Peel consented to make another attempt, and secured the assistance of all his former colleagues save one. "The Queen's government must be carried on," said Wellington. "We have done all that we could do for the landed interest. Now we must do all that we can for the Queen."

When Parliament met on January 22nd, 1846, Peel and Russell gave a brief explanation of the events of the recess. The House listened without much apparent interest, and a lukewarm debate seemed likely to follow, when Disraeli rose and made an eventful speech.

Benjamin Disraeli was the son of a Jew who had come to England in the middle of the 18th century. The elder Disraeli

was a great collector of books, and allowed his son the free run of his library. This encouraged his natural literary gifts, and he soon became well known as a novelist. He determined to enter Parliament, and after an unsuccessful attempt as a Radical, he obtained a seat in 1837 as a Conservative. When he rose to make his first speech he was dressed in "a bottle-green frock-coat and a waistcoat of white of the Dick Swiveller pattern, the front of which exhibited a network of glittering chains. Large fancy-pattern pantaloons, and a black tie, above which no shirt collar was visible, completed the outward man. His countenance was lividly pale, set out by a pair of intensely black eyes, and a broad but not very high forehead, overhung by clustering ringlets of coal-black hair, which, combed away from the right temple, fell in bunches of well-oiled small ringlets over his left cheek." The House refused to take him seriously, and laughed him down. "Though I am forced to sit down now," he exclaimed, "the time will come when you will hear me." He was bitterly disappointed when Peel overlooked him in forming his administration, and attacked him with a freedom of invective rare even in that age.

He now seized his opportunity with unerring instinct. The country gentlemen were consumed with rage at Peel's desertion, but few of them were ready speakers. Disraeli made himself their mouthpiece. He compared Peel to the Turkish admiral who surrendered his fleet to the enemy because of his objection to war, whose excuse was accepted, and who was made First Lord of the Admiralty by the new Sultan. He placed his conduct on a level with that of a nurse who had dashed out the brains of her charge. Every taunt was greeted with cheers from the Conservative members, who saw in Disraeli only their hired bravo, and did not realise that this was his first step towards the leadership of the party.

In spite of the opposition of the Protectionists, the repeal of the Corn Laws was carried in the Commons by the Whigs and those of Peel's followers who remained faithful to him.

Wellington told the Lords that they could do nothing without the House of Commons and the Crown, and they read the bill a third time on June 25th, 1846. That same night in the Commons a combination of Protectionists and Liberals threw out Peel's Irish Coercion Bill. He accepted his fate with dignity. In his last speech as minister he said:—"I shall leave a name execrated by every monopolist who maintains Protection for his own individual benefit; but it may be that I shall leave a name sometimes remembered with expressions of good-will in the abodes of those whose lot it is to labour, and to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brows, when they shall recruit their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because no longer leavened with a sense of injustice."

Though Peel had to resign office, he remained the greatest force in the state until his death. On June 29th, 1850, he was thrown from his horse, and three days later died of his injuries.

In forming an estimate of Peel, one is apt to dwell unduly on the two occasions on which he astounded his followers by proclaiming that he had altered his views on questions of the greatest importance. There is no doubt that Peel was not a great party leader. Though he possessed warm sympathies, his demeanour was shy and reserved. When the Queen first met him, she thought him "such a cold, odd man." He did not frequent the smoking-room of the House. He took no pains to court the mediocrities of his party. His mind was too judicial for their liking. He was always open to conviction, even by a political opponent. He was willing to examine any argument, whatever its source. He had accepted his Tory principles on trust from his father, and when circumstances forced him to examine them for himself, he found himself obliged to discard them. In the case of Catholic Emancipation and the repeal of the Corn Laws, the state of Ireland forced him to act at once, without preparing his followers for his change of front. His duty to his party came second to his duty to his country. He

was, as Guizot said, "the most liberal of Conservatives, the most conservative of Liberals, and the most capable man of all in both parties." It may seem that he would have done equally well if he had begun his career as a Whig. In that case, however, he would not have carried the moderate Conservatives with him. In his life-time it was necessary to make the Tory party less reactionary: there was little danger that the Whigs would prove rash innovators.

It is sometimes urged that Peel was not an original genius, that all he did was to adopt other men's ideas. There is some truth in this criticism; but it must be remembered that ideas were common at that time: the great difficulty was to translate them into Acts of Parliament. That was what Peel did: he carried all his great measures in the exact form in which he had planned them. When Peel became Prime Minister, the country was sinking deeper and deeper into misery and wretchedness; he did as much as any administrator could to lift her out of the slough. No English statesman has deserved better of his country.

After the break-up of the Conservative party there followed a period of confusion in English politics. The Whigs had helped Peel to abolish the Corn Laws, and they in turn were supported by the Conservative Free Traders until the cause of protection was dead and buried. After that the Peelites broke up as a party, some returning to the fold of Conservatism, others gravitating towards Liberalism. Then the greater importance of foreign affairs and the predominance of Palmerston caused a stagnation of party warfare.

On the resignation of Peel in June 1846, the Queen sent for Lord John Russell. Circumstances had changed since his failure to form an administration in the previous December. Neither group of the Conservative party could carry on the government, and Lord John was the only alternative.

The main interest of his ministry lies in foreign affairs and their effect upon English politics. The events of 1848, the year

of revolutions, led to a revival of Chartism. A meeting was arranged on Kennington Common, whence the Chartists were to march to the House of Commons with a monster petition, said to contain over 5,700,000 signatures. The government forbade the march, enrolled 200,000 special constables, and entrusted the defence of the capital to Wellington, who posted troops out of sight near the strategic points. These precautions overawed the organisers of the demonstration, who took the petition to the House in three cabs. There it was examined by clerks, who found that it contained less than 2,000,000 signatures, among which were those of the Queen, Prince Albert, and Wellington! The Commons made this an excuse for ridiculing the whole movement, of which this was the end.

Chartism was not laughed out of court: it perished because the growing prosperity of the country removed the economic distress which had given birth to it. It is often pointed out that all the demands of the Chartists have since been granted save annual Parliaments, which are no longer necessary, as Members are more under the control of their constituents. This does not prove, however, that those demands could have been granted with safety in the thirties and forties. One is bound to feel for the ignorance, the squalor, and the destitution of the artisans of this period; but their very claims on our sympathy are reasons why they could not be entrusted with the franchise. Education, an improvement in the conditions of labour, and a diminution in its hours were needed to fit them for citizenship.

The importance of foreign affairs at this time naturally brought the Foreign Secretary into prominence. Lord Palmerston's foreign policy will be described in another chapter. Here it is necessary to observe that he was of a sanguine and headstrong disposition, and that he fought for the independence of ministers in their own departments. His support of weak nations against the strong, and of the rights of peoples against autocracy was popular in the country, and gave him a strong position against the attempts of Russell to keep him in check.

The Queen objected strongly to the spirit and the manner of his policy, and repeatedly complained to the Prime Minister that she received the drafts of important despatches when the originals had gone. Palmerston promised to reform; but went on in the same way as before. In December 1851, news reached England of Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état*. The Queen and the Cabinet told Palmerston to make no comment on this event until the Cabinet had been given time for deliberation. Palmerston, however, held a conversation with the French ambassador in which he expressed his entire approval of the step. Lord John immediately asked the Queen to dismiss his unruly subordinate, and read in the Commons a memorandum written by her the year before, in which she complained bitterly of Palmerston's conduct. Palmerston made little effort to defend himself, and most men thought his career ended. He realised, however, that his unpopularity at court would do him little harm in the country, and in the following February he carried an amendment to a government measure which led to Lord John's resignation. "I have had my tit for tat with John Russell," he wrote to his brother, "and I turned him out on Friday last."

Lord Derby was called in, and after failing to secure the help of the Peelites, formed a purely Conservative administration, with Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the Commons. As his followers were in a minority in the Commons, he wound up the business of the session and appealed to the country.

Before the new Parliament met, Wellington had passed away in his sleep, at the age of 83. His career as a soldier does not fall within the scope of this book. He was not a great politician. He had not the imagination to foresee how his policy would affect men. He was not in sympathy with the new England, and the signs of the times meant little to him. But he was conscious of his limitations, and was willing to take the advice of a man like Peel who possessed the qualities which

he lacked. His greatness was moral, not intellectual. Everyone respected his simplicity, his loyalty, his strength of purpose. His character was a valuable asset to Peel in 1829 and 1846; for no one could attribute his action to self-interest. His funeral on November 18th, 1852 was one of the most magnificent in our history. His death was felt as a personal loss by thousands who had never seen him. England mourned, not for the soldier—she had not needed him for a generation—but for the man.

The general election made it clear that experience had convinced the country of the benefits of free trade. Disraeli saw that a revival of protection was out of the question; but in his Budget he attempted to redeem his promises to the landlords by halving the malt tax. On December 17th, 1852, the House rejected his proposals, and Lord Derby resigned.

The instability of ministries was becoming a national danger. The country was suspicious of the designs of Napoleon III, who had just proclaimed himself Emperor, and was anxious for a strong government. At last a coalition was formed between the Whigs and the Peelites. Though the latter were only some thirty strong in the Commons, they included the most brilliant members of Peel's cabinet. They were at one with the Whigs in supporting free trade and moderate reform, and there seemed no obstacle to their fusion. The Peelite leader, Lord Aberdeen, became Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston went to the Home Office, and Lord John Russell accepted a seat in the Cabinet without portfolio. To Gladstone, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, fell the task of framing a Budget in place of Disraeli's.

William Ewart Gladstone was the son of a Scottish merchant who had settled at Liverpool. He made a reputation as a classic and a debater at Eton and Christ Church, and entered Parliament as a Tory in 1832. In 1841 Peel made him Vice-President of the Board of Trade, where he gained a valuable insight into the commerce of the nation. In 1843 he was made President, and given a seat in the Cabinet. He was devotedly attached to his chief, and warmly resented the revolt of the

Protectionists in 1846. When Disraeli had finished explaining his Budget, at two o'clock in the morning, Gladstone jumped to his feet, and made one of the most brilliant extempore speeches ever heard in Parliament. The knowledge of finance he displayed on this occasion marked him as Disraeli's fitting successor at the Exchequer.

Gladstone devoted much time and thought to the Budget of 1853, which almost completed the simplification of the tariff begun by Peel. He abolished the duties on half-manufactured articles, reduced those on articles of food[1], and simplified the rest, which he retained for revenue, not for protection. He extended the legacy duties to real as well as personal property. The income tax was to be retained for seven years, and then abolished.

These are but the outlines of the scheme which it took him three hours to explain to the Cabinet. His colleagues decided to stand or fall by the Budget as a whole, and on April 18th, 1853, Gladstone made the first of his great Budget speeches. For nearly five hours the House listened to him with rapt attention, while he showed how his proposals would affect the life of the people. Many of his hearers found for the first time that facts and figures could possess an absorbing interest. Gladstone was already known as one of the finest orators in Parliament; he was now seen to be a constructive statesman. Aberdeen said that he had given a strength and lustre to the administration which it could not have derived from anything else.

Gladstone's hopes of national retrenchment and diminished taxation were blasted by the Crimean War.

[1] Gladstone lowered the duty on tea, which had previously been dearer than gin, from 2*s.* 2½*d.* to 1*s.* per lb.

CHAPTER III

THE CONDITION OF ENGLAND 1815–1853

It has been seen in the preceding chapters that English politics between Waterloo and the Crimean War had a sombre background of social distress, which often produced political discontent and agitation. The object of this chapter is to describe this background in greater detail, and to indicate the causes of improvement.

From the social standpoint one of the greatest evils of the Industrial Revolution was the fact that women, and even children, could attend to the new machines as well as men. A factory hand usually began to work at the age of five or six, and was condemned to spend thirteen or fourteen hours a day in a low-roofed, dark, and insanitary mill. He was allowed half an hour for dinner, and the same for tea; but in that time he had to clean his machine. If the machinery stopped for any reason, he was forced to work overtime to make up the loss. If he became drowsy and dozed over his work, he was in danger of being drawn into the cogs of the unfenced machinery. Every year a large number of preventable accidents occurred; but few employers went to the expense of safeguarding workmen who could easily be replaced.

The state of things in mines was even worse; though the different coalfields varied considerably. In South Wales children regularly began work underground at the age of five, and many were carried to their work at the age of four. In some districts women and girls dragged heavy loads of coal by means of a chain fastened to a belt round the waist. In many pits water dripped steadily from the roof, and some seams were only 22 inches high, with perhaps a foot of water in them.

When the factory hand or miner returned home after a long day's work, he found little in his surroundings to refresh him. The new factory towns had sprung up without the interference of building regulations or sanitary inspectors. The laws of hygiene were completely ignored. No provision was made for the removal of refuse. Bethnal Green was without a single sewer. The wells from which most towns obtained their water supply were often contaminated by graveyards, which existed in the most crowded quarters. There was no water to spare for cleansing houses or streets. The poor were crowded into dark courts and alleys. In Sunderland some houses had 150 inmates, who had to sleep five or six in a bed, in their living-rooms. Rural districts escaped most of these evils; but they also suffered from over-crowding—one village had an average of 36 persons in each cottage.

This disregard of all sanitary precautions had its inevitable result. Throughout the 18th century there were far more deaths than births in London. During the general prosperity which accompanied the Great War public health was good; for a well-fed person does not readily succumb to disease. But in the period of industrial depression which followed, semi-starvation was added to lack of air, light, and cleanliness. Typhus appeared in 1816, and remained endemic in the slums of the large towns. Typhoid, small-pox, and influenza followed. Cholera made its way from India in 1831–2, and swept away some 50,000 people. On its return in 1848 it claimed even more victims. In 1842 the average length of life among the professional classes in London was exactly twice that of the working classes. In the same year Glasgow had a death-rate of 40 per thousand. (Its present death-rate is 21 per thousand.)

In the early years of the 19th century Parliament made no serious attempt to deal with these problems of national welfare. In the Middle Ages the gilds had exercised an effective control over the conditions of labour. In the break-up of medieval

society in the Tudor period Parliament had re-enacted the most useful of the gild regulations. The Elizabethan Statute of Apprentices aimed at preventing the exploitation of child labour, by insisting on a seven years' apprenticeship. After the Civil War its provisions were rarely enforced, and they never applied to the new industries. When Parliament was asked to revive its provisions at the beginning of the 19th century, it was dissuaded by the doctrinaire economists. Adam Smith had pointed out that the state ought not to attempt to encourage industry and commerce; since, if free competition were allowed, self-interest would lead men to make bargains which would profit them; and if the individuals composing the state prospered, the state as a whole would prosper. (He demolished the old fallacy that one of the parties to a business transaction was bound to gain at the expense of the other.) This doctrine of *laissez faire*, which Adam Smith advanced at a time when commerce was hampered by mischievous restrictions, and which he put forward as a general rule, to which there were exceptions, was invested by his successors with the force of a law of nature. They insisted that state interference could not possibly do good, and would certainly do considerable harm. They pointed out that England was now faced with foreign competition, and they argued that shorter hours would mean a diminished output and less wages. Under their influence Parliament allowed unrestricted competition during the first third of the century, and gave capital free play.

The Reform Bill marks the beginning of a new epoch. We have seen that before that measure improvements had been made in the fiscal system, in criminal law and practice, and in the political status of Roman Catholics; but these changes were the work of high officials. Now Parliament was influenced by public opinion, and a private member who had strong outside support could force measures on the government. In all directions there was a tendency towards humanity and decency. The upper classes, in particular, were giving up the

fashionable vices of the 18th century. Three-bottle men were becoming rare, and though hard drinkers were still to be found, they did not consider it a point of honour to get drunk every night. In the twenties duelling was still common. From 1815 to 1830 Castlereagh, Canning, and Wellington were responsible in turn for the government of England, and they all fought duels. In the thirties duelling died out under the pressure of public opinion, and in 1844 the amended articles of war stated that any officer who fought a duel would be cashiered. Parliament prohibited the baiting of bulls and bears, and societies were formed for the prevention of cruelty to children and animals. In 1833 Wilberforce learnt on his death-bed that his life's work had been accomplished, and that slavery in the British Dominions had been abolished. Slaves over the age of six were to be prepared for freedom by a seven years' apprenticeship, and Parliament voted their owners £20,000,000 as compensation. Even so, some planters treated their apprentices worse than slaves, because they were no longer their property. A female apprentice in Jamaica was flogged to death on the treadmill, and the coroner's jury found that she had died "by the visitation of God"! Cruelties of this kind aroused such indignation in England that the colonists finally gave way, and freed all apprentices from August 1st, 1838.

In such an age it was not to be expected that the abuses of the factory system would pass unnoticed. Novelists like Charles Dickens and Charles Reade, and poets like Mrs Browning and Ebenezer Elliott, stirred the conscience of the nation. They brushed aside the plea that manufacturers would be ruined if they were forced to consult the interests of their employees. They insisted that the factory child was not a free agent, capable of making a fair bargain with his employer, and that even the grown-up artisan was forced to accept his master's terms or starve. They attributed the degradation of the working classes to their environment. It was often possible to tell a man's trade from the nature of the disease or deformity from

which he was suffering. Thousands of miners had never heard of Scotland, Ireland, or London. The number of criminal convictions increased nearly tenfold between 1805 and 1842, when there was one convict in every three hundred, and one pauper in every eleven of the population. The people of England were being distorted in body, mind, and soul; and *laissez faire* was doing nothing to check the process.

The authors who were thus trying to mould public opinion were able to appeal not only to humanitarianism, but to experience. A practical demonstration had been given that improved conditions and shorter hours of work did not entail economic loss. At the very end of the 18th century Robert Owen, the son of a Montgomery saddler, acquired the management of the New Lanark mills, where he introduced a series of sweeping reforms. Only children over ten years of age were allowed to work; before that age they were educated in infant schools. The working day was reduced from $11\frac{3}{4}$ to $10\frac{3}{4}$ hours. Wages were paid even when the mill was closed. As a result of the improvement in their surroundings and physique, the employees were able to do as much work as before, and Owen's reforms were an advantage even from a mercenary standpoint. His experiments attracted much attention; his factory was visited by the Tsar Nicholas shortly before his accession; and he enjoyed the patronage of the Duke of Kent.

The cause of factory legislation was championed in the House of Commons by Lord Ashley, better known by his later title of the Earl of Shaftesbury. Other men had a genius for war, art, or literature; Lord Ashley had a genius for philanthropy. No man ever sympathized more deeply with the needy and the oppressed, and no man ever gave more freely of his time and money. But Ashley's charity was not of the sort which corrupts and enervates its recipients: he was anxious to help men to help themselves. Becoming convinced that national supervision of factories was necessary, he joined the small band of M.P.s who were working for that object. His industry in collecting

facts and his skill in marshalling them, his rank, and, most of all, his character soon made him the spokesman of the movement. His name will always be associated with the Factory Acts. Between the Reform Bill and the Crimean War the worst evils of the factory system were remedied by law. By the Act of 1844 children between the ages of eight and thirteen were not to work more than six and a half hours a day, and were to attend school. Work in factories was limited to the time between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., or 7 a.m. and 7 p.m., with an hour and a half for meals, and a half holiday on Saturdays. Dangerous machinery was to be railed off, and a standard of sanitation was established. Home Office inspectors were to go round the country to see that these regulations were observed. Boys under ten years of age and females were forbidden to work underground, and inspectors of coal mines were empowered to frame regulations for the prevention of accidents.

These laws did not cause the fall in wages which had been prophesied. Since the introduction of expensive machinery, wages formed a smaller part of the cost of production, and the old hours of work had been so long that the quality of the work had suffered. The Factory Acts were passed in spite of the opposition of the leading statesmen of both parties. They were a notable triumph of common sense over official conservatism, and afford a practical justification of the Reform Bill.

The main credit for the improvement of public health must be given to Edwin Chadwick. As a member of the Royal Commission on Factories of 1833, and as the paid secretary of the permanent Poor Law Commission, he was impressed by the awful waste of life caused by the insanitary conditions prevailing in towns. The evidence he collected did not induce Parliament to move in the matter until the second visitation of cholera in 1848. Then a General Board of Health was set up to advise Parliament and the local Boards of Health, which were made compulsory where the death-rate was over 23

per thousand, and optional where it was under. As members of the central Board, Chadwick and Ashley insisted on a good water supply, the proper disposal of sewage, and the abolition of intramural burials. They encountered great opposition from water companies, builders, and undertakers; and the central Board came to an end in 1854. But the local Boards remained in existence; many of them had appointed medical officers of health; and the public were now beginning to realise the solidarity of the nation in the matter of health. It is worth noting that these reforms were made possible by the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835.

The state had partly recognised its duty towards the insane by the provision of asylums, but these institutions resembled the old-fashioned prisons in their harsh methods of discipline, the ignorance of their staff, and their total lack of any reforming purpose. In 1839 Dr Conolly, one of the founders of the British Medical Association, was made medical officer at Hanwell Asylum. There he found six hundred instruments of restraint—straps, hand-cuffs, coercion-chairs, strait-waistcoats, leg-locks, and the like. He immediately abolished all mechanical restraint and introduced humane and sympathetic methods of treatment, thus converting the asylum from a prison into a hospital, where lunacy could be studied by doctors. His methods were soon adopted throughout the land, and afterwards became universal in civilised countries.

Doctors were reducing the burden of human suffering in other ways. Vaccination, which Jenner had discovered in 1798, was made free in 1840. Surgeons and dentists first used nitrous oxide and ether in 1846, and in the next year Simpson discovered the anaesthetic properties of chloroform. In 1851 Parliament halved the work of doctors by abolishing the window tax.

It is convenient here to consider certain social legislation which has not been dealt with in the preceding chapters, because it did not affect the fate of ministries.

One of the striking features of the first half of the century was the growth of the daily press. In 1815 each newspaper had to bear a fourpenny stamp, and to pay a tax of 1*s.* 6*d.* for each advertisement. The paper itself was subjected to a heavy excise duty. Only well-to-do people could afford to buy newspapers at sevenpence a copy, and the circulation of the *Times* (printed by steam since 1814) was only 5,000. The Six Acts of 1819 subjected newspapers to a harsher law of libel; but after the death of Castlereagh the government made no attempt to exercise a censorship. The stamp duty was reduced to a penny in 1836, and abolished in 1855. The tax on advertisements was given up in 1853, and the excise on paper in 1861. The consequent cheapness of daily papers made them a "fourth estate of the realm." In 1850 towns with a population of 10,000 were empowered to levy a half-penny rate for the establishment and maintenance of free libraries.

At the beginning of the century the procedure for the recovery of debts was clumsy and expensive: one creditor spent £100 in recovering a debt of £19. If the debtor did not pay, he was sent to prison until he could. It is obvious that he could not earn the money in prison, and that he would remain there for life, unless he could find a friend to assist him. At the end of George IV's reign 6,000 debtors were in prison in London alone. At Ely a man was chained on his back to the ground for a debt of 3*s.* 5½*d.* Such a system was singularly ill-adapted to the needs of a commercial nation. By the beginning of the reign of Victoria, traders were allowed to become bankrupt, without imprisonment, for debts over £100; but the term "trader" was sometimes narrowly defined by judges. In 1844 judges were given the right to declare any insolvent debtor a bankrupt, and imprisonment was altogether abolished in the case of debts below £20. An act of 1846 revived the County Courts, giving them jurisdiction in cases where the debt did not exceed £20.

The position of criminals was also improved in this period. Offences, such as night poaching, which were not considered worthy of death, had hitherto been punished by transportation. The convict was first confined in a prison hulk, which was a floating hell of disease and vice, and was then sent out to New South Wales in a crowded ship. If he survived the long voyage, he worked out his sentence, and was handed over to a colonist as master. When he disobeyed orders, he could be flogged or given hard labour on the roads. If he remained unruly, he was sent to Norfolk Island, where existence was made so terrible that he probably committed a capital offence as a means of escape. A commission appointed in 1837 reported strongly against the system; but little was done until the colonists themselves set their faces against it. In 1853 and 1857 acts were passed which substituted penal servitude at home for transportation.

The tolerant spirit of the age was shown in two acts passed in 1836, by which Dissenters could celebrate marriages without the aid of a Church of England clergyman, and tithes were compulsorily commuted. The University of London, which was founded in that year, imposed no religious tests from the first. It was in this period that the foundations were laid of a national system of elementary education (see p. 151). The throwing open of the Indian Civil Service to competition in 1853 struck a blow at jobbery and gave an incentive to hard work.

We have seen above that the inventions of the 18th century were indirectly responsible for much distress by their dislocation of the labour market. We have now to turn to an invention which did more than anything else to make the working classes prosperous. The locomotive steam-engine was not invented by Stephenson, but it was he who made it a practical success. The son of a Northumbrian miner, George Stephenson made the most of his scanty opportunities of acquiring knowledge, and became an efficient engine-wright. In 1814 he completed his first locomotive. In 1823 he became engineer of the

projected railway between Stockton and Darlington. Its promoters had failed at first to obtain Parliamentary sanction for their scheme, as a certain peer had feared that it would disturb his fox-coverts; and the railway as finally approved had to make a detour to avoid the coverts of another nobleman. The directors intended using horses, or a cable attached to a stationary steam-engine, but Stephenson persuaded them to allow him to build locomotives. Their hesitation may be pardoned when one finds the *Quarterly Review* saying of a proposed line to Woolwich at this time: "The gross exaggeration of the powers of the locomotive steam-engine may delude for a time, but must end in the mortification of those concerned. We would back old Father Thames against the Woolwich Railway for any sum." Here we need historical sympathy. It is easy, after the event, to smile at these noblemen and writers for resisting an invention which was to confer enormous benefits on them; but they possessed no monopoly of short-sightedness, and they were not short-sighted in every respect. At present we are the judges of the past; our own generation will soon come up for trial.

The Stockton and Darlington line, though a success, attracted little attention outside the immediate neighbourhood; but Stephenson's next enterprise, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, aroused great interest. The opening in 1830 was well advertised by the presence of Wellington, who presided over the ceremony, by the fatal accident to Huskisson, who failed to get out of the way of "the Rocket", and by the speed of thirty-five miles an hour at which it conveyed him to hospital. Companies were soon formed to build other railways, and Stephenson and his son Robert were offered more work than they could undertake.

Parliament was so wedded to the idea of free competition that it at first imagined that railways could be treated like turnpike roads, and that private engines and coaches could be used on them. The influence of the road is also seen in the

design of the first railway carriages, which were modelled on the stage-coach. For some time railway companies neglected third-class passengers, who were placed in open trucks in cattle-trains, and often shunted into a siding for a couple of hours. When they finally reached their destination, the company's porters were not allowed to handle their luggage. The Cheap Trains Act of 1844 insisted that at least one train a day should be run from every station in each direction, providing covered carriages at a fare of a penny a mile.

Steam navigation kept pace with steam transport on land. In 1819 the Atlantic was first crossed by a steamship, which used her engines only as an auxiliary when the wind did not serve. In 1838 it was crossed in fifteen days by a vessel which relied on steam alone. Iron ships were now being built, and the screw soon came into general use.

The spread of railways made possible the introduction of penny postage. Under the old system, the charge for a letter varied with the distance it was carried; so that the postman spent much time in calculating and collecting the fees. When it cost a shilling to send a letter from London to Durham, few could afford to have many correspondents, and many of those who could afford it avoided payment by getting their letters "franked" by a member of Parliament. In a pamphlet entitled *Post Office Reform*, Rowland Hill urged that if a uniform charge of a penny were made, to be prepaid by the sender, so many more letters would be written that the Post Office would not lose. His scheme was scoffed at by experts, and regarded with indifference by the House of Commons; but it was eagerly welcomed by the country. In 1839 it was referred to a select committee, which reported in its favour, and in 1840 it was carried into effect. It need hardly be said that it was a success almost from the first. Three years later the first public telegraph office was opened in England.

The improvement in the means of communication benefited almost every class and individual in the kingdom. Travelling

was made cheap, easy and comfortable. A new field was opened for the investment of capital and the employment of labour. Man had been ousted from his place in the industrial world by the textile machines; but adult males were now required as boiler-makers, engine-drivers, stokers, and dockers. The cheapness of ocean travelling enabled over two million persons to emigrate in the eight years before the Crimean War, and made labour less of a drug on the market. The coal and iron trade was given a direct impetus. The annual production of coal increased four-fold, and that of pig-iron eleven-fold, during the first half of the century. Between 1828 and 1845 the blast furnace was improved, so as to produce cast iron by means of a hot air blast, which was heated by the unburnt gases from the top of the furnace. Every other industry gained indirectly; since the railways brought coal to manufacturers, and took their products to new markets, and to old markets at a lower rate. The penny post and telegraph became the nervous system of commerce, while the railways acted as its arteries, bringing fresh life wherever they went. The Industrial Revolution was given another impetus, and the increased production led to new inventions. Even farmers gained, and enjoyed a season of prosperity until the seventies, when transport became so cheap as to expose them to the competition of the western states of America.

In the generation after the repeal of the Corn Laws, the national wealth increased more rapidly than ever before or since, and all sections of the community shared in this prosperity. We have seen that this result was due to many causes, some of which were conflicting. The doctrinaire economists and the manufacturers who organised the Anti-Corn Law League succeeded in introducing *laissez faire* in trade, but failed to preserve it in industry. The country gentlemen, who had vainly resisted the repeal of the Corn Laws, supported the Factory Acts, partly out of revenge, partly out of conviction. Statesmen and inventors, civil servants and authors, philan-

thropists and doctors had worked for England in their several ways, and had made it a better country to live in. The general prosperity made men think that a better age was dawning for the whole world. In 1851 the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park seemed the beginning of a period when nations would strive to excel only in the arts of peace. But these dreams were soon to be dispelled. The generation of almost uninterrupted peace after Waterloo was to be succeeded by a series of wars in which all the great powers of the world were involved.

CHAPTER IV

FOREIGN RELATIONS TO THE END OF THE CRIMEAN WAR

The history of Europe in the 19th century was profoundly influenced by the principles of the French Revolution and the career of Napoleon. The revolutionary thinkers taught that the state should be identical with the nation, that all its members should receive equal treatment, and that they should be given complete liberty of action, save where the very existence of the state was concerned. From one standpoint the ideas of the Revolution were not new; but they had been ignored by kings and statesmen. The principle of nationality was neglected in the treaties of the 18th century, which handed provinces from one ruler to another without the slightest regard for the history, race, language, or religion of their inhabitants. The laws of every country dealt unequally with members of different classes, religions, or even districts. The state claimed the right to interfere with the liberty of its subjects in all their actions. When France proclaimed the abolition of privilege, and showed the power of a free nation in arms, she found sympathisers in every country in Europe, and at the outset her armies were welcomed as deliverers.

At first sight it seems that Napoleon checked the spread of these ideas. His design of making Europe into a despotic empire left little room for nationality or liberty. But the pressure of his rule tended to weld together all classes in the nations under his sway, and to produce a consciousness of national unity. In the War of Liberation the rulers appealed to this feeling; and though after his overthrow they tried to stamp it out, it still endured as a force which was to mould

the destiny of Europe. Countries which had previously been misgoverned gained enormously from Napoleon's administration, which was efficient and intelligent. By linking up all parts of the country by new roads and canals, by his encouragement of commerce, and by his establishment of a strong central government, Napoleon did much to break down local and separatist tendencies, and to create or revive national feeling. When, on his downfall, the old rulers and the old abuses were restored, men no longer acquiesced in them as necessary evils, which long tradition had established as an inevitable part of their world. The spell had been broken; the torpor of habit was ended; a new standard of criticism was provided.

The sovereigns and diplomatists who met at Vienna in 1814 ignored these facts and attempted to restore the old order as far as possible. The Holy Roman Empire had crumbled into dust in the shock of the Napoleonic wars, and in its place was established the German Confederation, whose members were united by the loosest of ties. The Emperor of Austria and the kings of Great Britain, Prussia, Denmark, and the Netherlands possessed dominions both within and without this confederation; so that German unity seemed as far off as ever. Prussia surrendered part of her Polish dominions to Russia, and received compensation on both sides of the Rhine, thus becoming more clearly the rival of France. The Austrian Netherlands were joined to Holland, as a barrier against French aggression. The king of Denmark had remained faithful to Napoleon to the last, and was accordingly deprived of Norway, which was handed over to Sweden. The petty Italian rulers were restored, the republic of Venice was given to Austria as compensation for the southern Netherlands, and the republic of Genoa was handed over to Piedmont, to strengthen her as a buffer against France.

Before the Congress of Vienna separated in 1815, an attempt was made to establish a concert of Europe which would keep the

peace for the future, and prevent a recurrence of the bloodshed and anarchy of the last quarter of a century. On the invitation of the Tsar Alexander, the great powers formed the Holy Alliance, promising to adjust all their differences in accordance with the principles of the Christian religion. The control of its policy soon passed into the hands of Metternich, the Austrian Foreign Minister. The Austrian empire, that conglomeration of fragments of races, had most to fear from national and democratic aspirations, and Metternich used the Holy Alliance as an international engine for crushing these ideas wherever they showed themselves.

Castlereagh had at first welcomed the formation of the Alliance as a force which made for international stability; but when he saw it interfere in the internal affairs of the smaller states, he protested, and refused Great Britain's consent to its actions. His remonstrances, however, were of little practical effect, and popular movements were stamped out wherever they appeared.

In 1821 a revolt broke out in Greece which raised the "Eastern Question", and finally dissolved the Holy Alliance. The Turks have proved themselves powerful in conquest, but weak in administration. No sooner had they reached their high water mark at the beginning of the 17th century than they began to decline. Their government was the crudest form of Oriental despotism, in which everything depended on the personality of the ruler. The Sultans under whom their early successes were won were men of strong character; but their successors were weak, and became the puppets of their Janissaries. The most elementary duties of government were left unperformed, and provincial governors were enabled to make themselves practically independent of their suzerain, and to levy heavy exactions from the subject races. Christianity was given a contemptuous toleration, and, in the absence of a proper system of government, the bishops of the Greek Church exercised considerable political influence. With the exception

of a few Roman Catholics, all Christians in the Turkish Empire belonged to the Greek Church, and, whatever their race, were classed as "Greeks" by the government. They had no rights against the Mussulmans, whether Turks or Slavonic converts. Thus society was organised on a religious basis, as in Western Europe at the time of the religious wars, and national feeling was dormant.

This loosely organised structure would soon have perished, had it not been for the jealousies of the great powers. Since the time of Peter the Great, the ambition of Russia had been directed towards Constantinople, and a series of campaigns had given her the Black Sea coast from the mouth of the Danube nearly to Batum. But the advance of Russia was viewed with jealousy by Austria, her natural rival, and by Great Britain, who had a practical monopoly of the trade of the Levant, and who was not unwilling that the key of her trade routes to the East should remain in weak hands. Owing to this conflict of ambitions, co-operation on the part of the great Christian nations was impossible, and in 1815 the Turks still ruled over virtually the whole of the Balkan Peninsula.

Even the Balkan Peninsula was affected by the French Revolution, and the Greek national movement was helped forward by a literary revival. Secret societies were formed, which in 1821 organised revolts in Moldavia and Wallachia, and in the Morea. The former movement came to nothing, as the Rumanians, though members of the Greek Church, had no wish to be ruled over by Greeks, especially as they already enjoyed a considerable measure of self-government. The outbreak in the Morea was more successful, and spread to the islands, and to Greece north of the Isthmus of Corinth. The Greeks massacred the Turkish garrisons, and the Sultan retaliated by hanging the Greek Patriarch from his palace gate, and by exterminating the Chians.

The Tsar Alexander was drawn in two directions by this revolt. On the one hand "Holy" Russia was bound to

sympathise with her co-religionists, and her political dreams might be realised by making common cause with them. On the other hand, the Tsar could not champion the cause of insurgents against their lawful sovereign without abandoning the principle of "legitimacy" on which the Holy Alliance was based. Castlereagh saw the difficulty, and succeeded in making Alexander promise not to intervene single-handed.

The affairs of Spain also engaged the attention of European statesmen at this time. In 1820 Ferdinand VII was driven from his throne, and the government was carried on by the Cortes. But its administration was no better than the king's; the country was in a state of disorder; and a pestilence increased the confusion. In 1822 the members of the Holy Alliance met in congress at Verona to consider a joint policy with regard to Greece and Spain. Castlereagh intended going to the Congress as the British representative, and drew up a memorandum in which he protested strongly against combined or separate interference in Spain. Before the Congress met, however, he had committed suicide in a fit of melancholia, brought on by over-work (August 12th, 1822).

His place as Foreign Secretary and Leader of the Commons was taken by Canning, who carried on his policy with greater vigour of language and action. Canning was not able to prevent the Holy Alliance from entrusting France with the task of restoring Ferdinand; but he determined that "if France had Spain, it should not be Spain with the Indies." The Spanish-American colonies had revolted after Napoleon's attempt to establish his brother on the throne of Spain, and had maintained their virtual independence after the conclusion of peace and the restoration of their former sovereign. They had formed a welcome market for British trade; but the Spanish government, which retained only a few isolated ports, authorised privateers to seize British ships trading with the insurgents. Canning now persuaded President Monroe to declare that the United States would regard the intervention of any other

European country in Central or South America as an unfriendly act, and he himself plainly told France that Great Britain would not allow her to interfere. Left to her own resources, Spain proved unable to reconquer her former subjects, and in 1824 and 1825 Canning recognised the independence of Mexico, Chili, the Argentine, and the other new states. "I called the New World into existence," he boasted, "to redress the balance of the Old."

Canning's attitude towards the Greeks was friendly; but he was determined not to allow Russia to take advantage of the struggle. The Greeks were aided by volunteers from western Europe, particularly from England and France; they had gained command of the sea; and their cause prospered on the whole until 1824. In that year the Sultan in despair appealed for help to Mehemet Ali, the pasha of Egypt. The son of an Albanian tobacco-grower, Mehemet Ali had risen by force of character to be ruler of Egypt, owing only a nominal allegiance to the Sultan. He now sent his step-son, Ibrahim Pasha, in command of the Egyptian fleet and army against the Greeks. In 1825 Ibrahim landed in the Morea, and began systematically exterminating the Greeks, intending to repeople the country with Mohammedans from Africa. In the same year the Tsar Alexander died, and was succeeded by his brother, Nicholas. Nicholas cared little for the Greeks, but took advantage of the Sultan's embarrassment to urge on him demands of his own.

The situation was thus completely changed, and Canning saw the importance of ending the struggle before it could spread further. He secured the co-operation of Russia and France in pressing the Porte to admit the independence of the Greeks. When this demand was refused, the combined fleets of the three countries were despatched to the Morea to cut off supplies and reinforcements from Egypt. The Greeks who still remained alive in the Morea were reduced to living on boiled grass, and the allies could see the smoke of burning villages in the interior. On October 20th, 1827, the joint fleet, under the command of

Codrington, who had commanded the *Orion* at Trafalgar, entered the magnificent bay of Navarino, where the Egyptian fleet was anchored. The Turks fired on the long-boat of the *Dartmouth*, which had been sent to parley, and a general action followed. After four hours the Turks, having lost 53 ships out of 82, themselves blew up the remainder.

Canning had died two months before the battle of Navarino, and, after a short interval, his place as Prime Minister was taken by Wellington. It was Canning's great merit that he refused to apply the formulas of the eighteenth to the problems of the nineteenth century. He understood that the principles of the revolution, so explosive when neglected, would make for stability when they were accepted. His clear insight into the needs of the time was equalled by his vigour in action. He did more than anyone else to free Europe from the tyranny of the Holy Alliance.

Wellington immediately reversed Canning's policy. When George IV opened Parliament in January 1828, he was made to "lament deeply that this conflict should have occurred with the naval forces of an ancient ally," and to express "a confident hope that this untoward event would not be followed by further hostilities." This change of front encouraged the Turks in their obstinacy, and allowed Russia to go to war with them alone. The Sultan had just massacred his over-powerful Janissaries, and was soon forced to accept a peace by which Moldavia and Wallachia were made self-governing under Russian protection. Greece was made an independent state, under the guarantee of Great Britain, France, and Russia (1829).

In July 1830 a revolution broke out in Paris, owing to the attempt of Charles X to suspend the constitution by which he had promised to govern. He was easily deposed, and Louis Philippe, son of Philippe Egalité, established himself as a bourgeois monarch. The news of this success produced a rising in Brussels. The Belgians differed in speech, religion, and history from the Dutch, and resented the attempt of the

king to stamp out their nationality. Wellington had regarded the union of Holland and Belgium as one of the most valuable achievements of the Congress of Vienna; but his government fell before he had time to consider his attitude towards the revolution.

The Foreign Secretary in Grey's cabinet was Lord Palmerston, an Irish peer. Palmerston had been at the War Office from 1809 to 1828, and had been one of Canning's greatest admirers. Like Canning, he objected to the reaction which had followed the overthrow of Napoleon, and sympathised with Continental Liberals in their struggle against arbitrary rule. But he was too ready to interfere in the affairs of other countries when the interests of Great Britain were not concerned. A keen sportsman, he took risks in diplomacy as he did in the hunting field, because the spice of danger was to him an agreeable excitement. He loved getting into difficulties to show how well he could get out of them. Grey kept him in his place; but Melbourne and Russell were unable to restrain his headstrong and unruly nature. His handsome appearance, his humour, his extraordinary vitality, his self-confidence, and his spirited policy gained him the support of the country, and gave him a position of almost complete independence in politics. He was his own party.

England was keenly interested in Belgium's struggle for independence, and looked to Palmerston to apply Canning's principles to the question. Palmerston handled the situation with great skill, and secured the co-operation of the other great powers, particularly of France. It was largely owing to his tact that hostilities were finally stopped, and the Dutch forced to admit the independence of Belgium. In 1839 England, France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia guaranteed the independence of Belgium in a treaty destined to become famous in our own day as the "scrap of paper".

Meanwhile the Eastern question had been reopened. In 1831 Mehemet Ali invaded Syria, whose pasha had offended him, speedily conquered it, and marched through Asia Minor. The

Sultan appealed to the Powers; but England and France were absorbed in the affairs of Belgium, and only Russia was in a position to come to his aid. The other powers forced Turkey to recognise Mehemet Ali as pasha of Syria, and Russia secured as the price of her assistance the closing of the Dardanelles to all ships of war but her own and those of Turkey. This aroused Palmerston's suspicions of Russia (which he expressed in his usual outspoken style), and disposed him to support the decaying Turkish empire.

In 1838 Mehemet Ali again attacked the Sultan. France was inclined to sympathise with his ambition, as he had introduced French officers, engineers, and doctors into Egypt; but England, Russia, Prussia and Austria agreed in considering that his progress must be stopped. Palmerston instructed the English ambassador in Paris to tell the French Foreign Minister "in the most friendly and inoffensive manner, that if France throws down the gauntlet, we shall not refuse to pick it up." Louis Philippe dared not risk his throne, and abandoned the cause of Mehemet Ali, who was defeated by the allies, and forced to content himself with Egypt and Southern Syria. The Dardanelles and Bosphorus were now closed to all foreign warships in time of peace.

There was trouble in the Far, as well as in the Near East. The events leading up to the disastrous retreat from Kabul belong to the history of India (see pp. 248–9), but it must here be pointed out that Palmerston saw in them fresh evidence of Russia's sinister designs.

In 1840 this country became engaged in the "Opium War" with China. It must be remembered that the Chinese authorities objected not only to the opium traffic, but to all intercourse with foreigners, and that many of their demands, such as that for the execution of all British opium merchants, were unreasonable. They made a brave resistance, but had no chance of success against European weapons. In 1842 they were forced to pay an indemnity, to cede Hong-Kong to Great Britain, and to throw open Canton, Shanghai, and three other ports to all foreign trade.

By this time Melbourne's government had fallen, and Palmerston had been replaced at the Foreign Office by Aberdeen, who was a complete contrast to him. Mild and conciliatory by nature, Aberdeen was in full accord with Peel, who desired peace for his financial reforms. He came to a good understanding with Guizot, the French Prime Minister, and though the *entente* did not extend beyond official circles, it did much for peace at a time when France was still sore after her rebuff in the Levant. Aberdeen showed the same disposition in his settlement of the disputes with the United States. These questions were mainly concerned with boundaries, and were not serious in themselves, but Palmerston's bluntness of speech had given great offence in America. Under Aberdeen an understanding was reached, to the relief of both countries.

On the fall of Peel, many Whigs were opposed to Palmerston's return to the Foreign Office. Lord John Russell, however, promised to keep him in check—an undertaking which was not carried out—and he again became Foreign Secretary. He soon made himself detested by foreign rulers by his habit of sending them lectures on their duties to their subjects. There is no doubt that his advice was good, and might have averted the explosions which followed; but it was not asked for.

In February 1848 some French Liberals arranged to hold a banquet in Paris, at which speeches were to be made in favour of a wider franchise. Guizot was opposed to electoral reform, and Louis Philippe was unpopular because he was supposed to favour the middle class against the workmen. His rather colourless foreign policy also annoyed a country which attaches much importance to its prestige. On the prohibition of the banquet, barricades were erected, street-fighting began, and Louis Philippe abdicated.

The news of this revolution produced outbreaks throughout Europe. Every province of the Austrian Empire rose in revolt: Hungary declared its independence, the citizens of Milan and Venice drove out the Austrian garrisons, and even Vienna rose

and forced the Emperor to dismiss Metternich and to grant a constitution. The king of Sardinia put himself at the head of the national movement in Italy, which was reluctantly joined by the Pope and the king of the Two Sicilies. Revolutions broke out in Germany. But the democratic and national movements lacked discipline and cohesion, and in 1849 autocracy was re-established wherever it had previously existed.

Throughout these struggles Palmerston had shown himself the friend of oppressed nationalities. He made no secret of his wish to see the end of Austrian dominion in Italy, and he advised the Porte not to hand over to Austria the Hungarian patriots who had fled to Turkey after the failure of their rising. He backed up his advice by sending the fleet to the Dardanelles, in case Austria should contemplate the use of force. Russia, on the other hand, had viewed these revolutions with alarm, and had been anxious lest they should spread to Poland. It was mainly owing to the loan of a Russian army of 120,000 men that the Austrian Emperor was finally able to put down the Hungarian revolt. The Tsar and Palmerston had therefore stood forth as the champions of opposite principles. Many English Liberals were led to believe that the Continent could not be freed until Russia had been beaten in war.

The Queen strongly objected to Palmerston's policy, and sympathised with Austria. Russell agreed with Palmerston's aims, but disliked his methods, and many Whigs felt that he ran the risk of war too lightly. But Palmerston defended his whole policy in a great speech, and was supported by a majority of the House. It was clear that the foreign policy of the government was its only title to popularity, and Russell could not afford to alienate a minister whom he could not control.

On the abdication of Louis Philippe a republic was decreed and a provisional government established. In December 1848 Louis Napoleon, nephew of the great Napoleon, was elected president by an overwhelming majority. In December 1851 he made himself dictator, putting down all opposition with ruthless

severity, and a year later he assumed the title of Emperor, as Napoleon III[1]. We have already seen (p. 45) that Palmerston immediately approved of Napoleon's *coup d'état* of December 1851, and that his disobedience proved too much even for Russell's patience. Though Palmerston soon returned to office, on the formation of Aberdeen's ministry, he had to content himself with the Home Office, and, in fact, was never again Foreign Secretary.

Napoleon III's rise to power was viewed with alarm in this country. He owed his success entirely to the Napoleonic legend, of which hostility to England was an essential feature. He succeeded to his uncle's liabilities, as well as to his assets, and France expected him to wipe out the stain of Waterloo. Whether he ever seriously contemplated an invasion of England it is difficult to say. He cherished many plans which were inconsistent with each other, and this may well have been among them. For the time being he sought to keep on good terms with England; but the friendship of "the chameleon of the Tuileries" was not to be relied on.

Like many other usurpers, Napoleon III wished to distract his subjects' attention from domestic affairs by means of a spirited foreign policy. He had said that the Empire was peace; but he knew that France, tired of the humdrum policy of Louis Philippe, was yearning for glory. In 1850 he had demanded from the Porte the custody of the "Holy Places" connected with the chief events in the life of Christ. This right, originally possessed by France, had been allowed to lapse more than a century before, since when the shrines had been cared for by members of the Greek Church, under the protection of the Tsar. Nicholas was not unwilling to seize this opportunity of reopening the Eastern question. During his visit to England in 1844 he had had long conversations with Aberdeen on the future of the Ottoman

[1] After Waterloo, Napoleon I had abdicated in favour of his son († 1832), who never sat on the throne, but whom the Bonapartists regarded as Napoleon II.

Empire. He now (Jan. 1853) suggested to the British ambassador at St Petersburg that instead of waiting for the death of "the sick man", i.e. the disruption of the Ottoman Empire through internal weakness, and running the risk of a European war, it would be better to partition that empire beforehand, England's share being Egypt and Crete. At the same time the Tsar sent an envoy to Constantinople, not only to insist on his right of looking after the Holy Places, but to demand that he should be acknowledged as the protector of all members of the Greek Church in the Sultan's dominions.

The British government instructed its representative at St Petersburg to inform the Tsar that it could not be a party to the dismemberment of a friendly state, and that it considered the Turkish Empire to be more healthy than he imagined. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the British ambassador at Constantinople, acting entirely on his own responsibility, advised the Porte to reject the demand of the Tsar to become the ultimate court of appeal for fourteen millions of its subjects. Now, unfortunately, the composite nature of Aberdeen's cabinet gave its diplomatic utterances an uncertain tone. Aberdeen's desire for peace was so strong that, if left to himself, he would have exhausted all the resources of diplomacy before drawing the sword. Palmerston, who was supported by Russell, wished to ensure peace by making it clear to the Tsar that war with Turkey would mean war with England as well. Either of these lines of policy, taken separately, might have preserved peace; but Palmerston's desire for plain speaking was neutralised by Aberdeen's pacific assurances. The Tsar, convinced that England did not want war, ordered his troops to occupy Moldavia and Wallachia, as a means of bringing pressure to bear on the Porte. This step aroused the jealousy of Austria, who summoned the Russians to withdraw, which they soon did. It now seemed that the English and French forces which had been sent out to Gallipoli in April 1854, and afterwards moved to Varna, might well be recalled. But Napoleon III thought that a war, particularly a war in alliance

with England, would make his throne more secure, and the temper of England was Jingoistic. "It was not so much a good peace, as a good war, that was wanted in England in the summer of 1854." The *Times* suggested that the allied army ought to attack the arsenal of Sebastopol, and the idea was welcomed by Napoleon and by Palmerston, who thought it high time to teach Russia a lesson. This plan was finally imposed on Raglan and his French colleague, though they disapproved of it.

In its ignorance of naval matters, the nation expected much from the despatch of our fleet to the Baltic—an expectation which was unwisely raised by the language of the admiral in command. It may be said at once that the fleet found it impossible to do anything against the fortifications of Kronstadt. There was nothing to hinder British sea power from discharging its proper functions in convoying troops to the Crimea and maintaining their communications. These troops were singularly ill-prepared for the task before them. At that time the army offered few attractions to a man who was not actually starving. Discipline was harsh—in 1836 a private was flogged to death at Woolwich. The life was terribly monotonous: there were no libraries or recreation rooms; breakfast and dinner consisted of the same food, cooked in the same way, all the year round, except on Christmas day; and enlistment was for life. The training was confined to barrack-square drill, field manœuvres were rare, and the musketry course of most regiments was limited to three rounds of ammunition a year.

In September 1854 fifty thousand allied troops were disembarked in the Bay of Eupatoria, some forty miles north of Sebastopol. On the 20th they drove the Russians from a strong position on the heights of the river Alma, and the road to Sebastopol was open. Raglan wished to attack the town immediately from the north; but the French general insisted on marching round to the south, and beginning a regular siege. There seems little doubt that Sebastopol would have fallen if it had been attacked at once, as it was practically unfortified;

but the three weeks' delay enabled its defenders to construct strong earthworks and to call up reinforcements. When the bombardment was opened, it did little damage, and the Russians, who now outnumbered the allies by two to one, were emboldened to take the offensive. Heavy losses at Balaclava and Inkerman shook their confidence, and siege warfare was resumed.

Now were revealed the defects of British administration. Most of the troops had no tents, or even knapsacks. They were given no fuel to cook the raw meat and unroasted coffee berries served out to them. The absence of fresh vegetables caused an outbreak of scurvy, a terrible disease, for which the cure is lime-juice. There were ample supplies of lime-juice in store; but they were not issued for some months. Then the Russian winter set in, heralded by a cyclone which sank twenty-one store-ships. In the fine weather no metalled road had been constructed between the camp and the sea base at Balaclava, and the rough track already existing became almost impassable. The transport mules died owing to lack of fodder, and the men had to act as beasts of burden when they were not in the trenches. Cholera, which had already broken out at Varna, again made its appearance. The sick and wounded were placed on the bare ground under canvas, and fed on salt beef and biscuit until they could be shipped off to the hospital at Scutari. There all the laws of hygiene were ignored—during the whole of November only six shirts were washed.

For the first time in history the public at home were kept informed of the progress of the war by the reports of newspaper correspondents. The revelation of the facts produced a deep impression: in January 1855 a motion was carried in Parliament for a committee of enquiry, and Aberdeen resigned. The Queen sent for Derby, who was too timid to seize his opportunity. Though the Conservatives were in a minority, any government which vigorously prosecuted the war would have been certain of support. Russell, who was next summoned, failed to secure the assistance of his late colleagues, who were

disgusted at his disloyalty to Aberdeen. There was nothing for it but to call in Palmerston, who was joined by all the Liberal members of the late cabinet. The country felt that at last a man was in power who knew his own mind, and it had every confidence that he would carry the war to a successful conclusion.

Before Palmerston became Prime Minister, the work of reorganisation in the Crimea had been begun, and Miss Florence Nightingale had taken charge of the hospital at Scutari. The popular idea of Florence Nightingale is inadequate and incorrect. It is true that she possessed that sympathy which is essential in a nurse; but sympathy alone would have been of little avail at Scutari. Her success was due, not to her feminine, but to her masculine, qualities; not to her heart, but to her head. She had long devoted herself to the study of nursing as a science, and she now determined to organise the Scutari hospital on proper lines. She had to face the conservatism of army doctors, who were horrified at the intrusion of a woman into their domain; but she had been given *carte blanche* by the Secretary at War, and she crushed all opposition. When the war was over, she devoted herself to the reform of hospitals at home, collecting facts and figures for blue books, and forcing unwilling ministers to take action. It was Florence Nightingale who made of nursing a profession which educated ladies might enter in time of peace, as well as in war.

In March 1855, the Tsar Nicholas died, really of a broken heart at the treachery of "General Février". Alexander II was anxious for peace, but would not consent to the neutralisation of the Black Sea. On this Palmerston insisted, and he reflected the determination of the nation to continue the war until our military prestige was restored. In April the allies were joined by 15,000 troops from Piedmont, whose Prime Minister, Count Cavour, was anxious to be present at the peace negotiations, in order to raise the question of Italy's wrongs. On September 8th the English were repulsed from the Redan earthwork for the second time; but the French took the Malakoff, and the

Russians evacuated Sebastopol. Preliminaries of peace were agreed to in November, and the Treaty of Paris was signed in March 1856. The independence and territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire were guaranteed. The Sultan promised liberty of worship and civil equality to all his Christian subjects. The Black Sea was neutralised, i.e. thrown open to all merchant vessels and closed to all warships. No arsenals were to be built on its shores.

The diplomacy which ended the Crimean War was no better than that which failed to prevent it. It required little foresight to see that the terms of the Treaty of Paris would either not be put into effect at all, or would not last long. It is difficult to see in what respect England had gained. The administration of the army had been bad during the war, and it remained bad afterwards. No generalship had been shown on our side: the three great battles were "soldiers' battles" pure and simple. Indeed it was only the troops who came out of the war with credit. They had fought bravely, and had borne their hardships without complaint; but it needed no war simply to prove that British soldiers could fight.

The Crimean War was the first great European contest for forty years. In the preceding period the energies of English statesmen had been mainly devoted to domestic matters, and on the Continent the movements in favour of nationality and democracy had met with no success on a large scale. The Crimean War proved the prelude to many others, which resulted in the unification of Italy and Germany.

CHAPTER V

PALMERSTONIAN ENGLAND

PALMERSTON had been called to power to finish the Crimean War, and he was expected to resign when the war was over. He was over seventy years of age, and had spent more than half his life in office. But he was still full of energy, and save for a short interval, he remained in power for another ten years. During this period there was a truce of parties. Palmerston, like Canning, was Liberal abroad, but Conservative at home. He sympathised with the subjects of Continental despots because their grievances were tangible; but he could not imagine how any sane man could wish for an alteration in the British constitution. This attitude gained him the support of the Conservatives, who were anxious to keep out the Radicals, and who still only half trusted Disraeli. The Radicals, on the other hand, while disapproving of his inaction at home, heartily supported his Italian policy.

In 1856 Palmerston involved the country in another war with China, which might easily have been avoided. His action was condemned by Parliament in 1857; but he appealed to the country, and gained a substantial majority. The troops which were sent out for China were diverted to India on the outbreak of the Mutiny, and just turned the scale in our favour.

Just when Palmerston seemed likely to retain power for the rest of his life, he was driven from office by an unexpected chain of circumstances. On January 14th, 1858, an Italian named Orsini hurled a bomb at the carriage in which Napoleon III was driving to the Opera. The Emperor and Empress escaped unhurt; but ten persons were killed and 156 wounded by the explosion. The horror which this outrage naturally aroused in France was

turned into a desire for revenge against England when it was found that the plot had been hatched in London, and the bombs made in Birmingham. Some French colonels wrote to the Emperor, begging him to lead them against a country which harboured such assassins, and their letters were published in the French official newspaper. The French Foreign Minister wrote a very outspoken despatch, in which he demanded that the laws of England should be improved so as to make such a crime impossible for the future. Palmerston thought this a reasonable request, and introduced a bill making conspiracy to murder a foreigner in a foreign country a felony. But the country resented the attempt of France to dictate to us at a moment when our hands were full with Indian affairs, and the bill was thrown out. Palmerston resigned, and Derby consented to form a ministry.

The new government obviously existed only on sufferance. The Conservatives were in a minority in the Commons, and were weak in debating power. Disraeli had to stand up alone against Palmerston, Russell, Gladstone, and Bright. The ministry lasted just over a year, and in 1859 Palmerston came back, this time for life.

In his second administration Palmerston had the assistance of Lord John Russell, who became Foreign Secretary, and who was made Earl Russell in 1861, and of Gladstone, who became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Gladstone now abandoned his neutral position between the two great parties, and definitely threw in his lot with the Liberals. His financial measures were the only domestic achievements of the government. His Budget of 1860 marks the final triumph of free trade principles. He abolished the duties on all exports, and on all imports save 48, of which only 15 were articles of general consumption. These duties were retained as a convenient means of raising revenue, not for the sake of protecting home industries. In 1861 Gladstone founded the Post Office Savings Bank, which not only encouraged thrift among the lower classes, but provided the government with money at a low rate of interest. At the end of

the century its deposits amounted to £140,000,000. This was a period of great prosperity—the foreign trade of the country doubled between 1854 and 1866—but Gladstone insisted on the need for economy. He remitted taxation, reduced the National Debt, and opposed all extravagant expenditure.

Lord John Russell was anxious for further Parliamentary reform. Half the middle class and the whole of the working class were still without the franchise, and there were still anomalies in the constituencies. In 1860 he brought in a bill which received the support of Gladstone and Bright, but which was stifled by the passive resistance of Palmerston. Henceforward foreign affairs kept him chained to his department, and on these he was in full agreement with the Prime Minister.

When Palmerston returned to office in 1859, public attention was concentrated on Italian affairs. In no country were the results of Napoleon I's career more important than in Italy. His firm and efficient government was a complete contrast to the rule of the petty tyrants whom he dispossessed, and the fact that the whole of the peninsula was under his rule awakened national self-consciousness. The Congress of Vienna plunged Italy back into the darkness of the Middle Ages. The Bourbon King of the Two Sicilies once more ruled over the south, and the Pope over the centre. The King of Piedmont and Sardinia was given Genoa, and Austria joined Venetia to Lombardy. The small duchies north of the papal states were governed by younger members of the house of Hapsburg. The restored princes had learnt nothing from experience. Their rule was more corrupt, more arbitrary, and more incapable than ever. Mazzini preached the doctrine of Italian unity, and inspired his countrymen to die for an ideal. Garibaldi showed that the age of chivalry was not past. But all attempts to overthrow the established order were foiled by the support given to it by Austria. Gladstone visited Naples in 1850, and was shocked by the state of the administration, which he described as "the negation of God erected into a system of government."

There was hope from one quarter. Victor Emmanuel, King of the tiny state of Piedmont, was determined to unite the whole peninsula. His Prime Minister, Cavour, was one of the most subtle diplomatists that even Italy has produced. Cavour saw that the first thing to be done was to drive the Austrians out of Lombardy and Venetia, and he realised that this could not be done without foreign help. He secured the aid of Napoleon III, and brought about a rupture with Austria in April 1859. After defeating the Austrians at Magenta and Solferino, Napoleon left his task only half accomplished, and was content to make Austria cede Lombardy to Piedmont. But his invasion had encouraged the inhabitants of the central duchies to drive out their rulers, and to demand incorporation with Piedmont.

Englishmen viewed these events with mixed feelings. As yet few felt any sympathy with Italian aspirations, and most of them were deeply suspicious of Napoleon's designs. The Queen favoured Austria, and a majority of the cabinet was opposed to meddling with the question. In Palmerston, Russell, and Gladstone, however, Italy had three strong friends. They forced the cabinet to adopt their view that no foreign power should be permitted to interfere with the duchies, but that they should be allowed to decide their own future. In March 1860, the duchies were incorporated with Piedmont as the result of a plebiscite.

Now came the most romantic part of the unification of Italy. Garibaldi left Genoa with his thousand red-shirts on May 5th, 1860, landed in Sicily on the 11th, and was master of the island by the end of July. Lord John Russell refused to allow any foreign power to interfere with his passage across the Straits of Messina, and he was thus enabled to begin his march on Naples. Then followed Victor Emmanuel's annexation of the papal states, except the district around Rome. Save for this district and for Venetia, Italy was now united under one king. Such a result was distasteful to Russia and Prussia, who approached Austria and France with a view to undoing it. But Russell told them frankly that "Her Majesty's Government

must admit that the Italians are the best judges of their own interests. It is difficult to believe, after the astonishing events that we have seen, that the Pope and the King of the Two Sicilies possessed the love of their people." Therefore "Her Majesty's Government can see no sufficient ground for the severe censure with which Austria, France, Prussia and Russia have visited the acts of the King of Sardinia." When this despatch was made public at the beginning of November 1860, Italian enthusiasm knew no bounds. One of Cavour's most trusted subordinates declared that it was worth an army of 100,000 men. Lord John's nephew wrote to him "You are blessed night and morning by twenty millions of Italians..... The moment it was published in Italian, thousands of people copied it from each other to carry it to their homes and weep over it for joy and gratitude in the bosom of their families."

The unification of Italy was primarily the work of the Italians themselves, under the inspiration and guidance of their own leaders. A nation can gain freedom only by its own efforts. But the support of England was indispensable. By laying down the principle that Italians of one state might interfere in the affairs of another state, but that no foreign intervention was to be tolerated, Palmerston and Russell "kept the ring", and allowed the Italians to work out their own salvation.

The completion of Italian unity was accomplished with the aid of Prussia, whom Italy joined in the war of 1866 against Austria, receiving Venetia for her assistance. In 1870 the French garrison was forced to evacuate Rome to fight against the Prussians, and the troops of Victor Emmanuel occupied the city which alone could be the national capital.

While Cavour and Garibaldi were laying the foundations of modern Italy, England was becoming more and more nervous of the danger of a French invasion. In March 1860, immediately after the incorporation of the central duchies with Piedmont, Napoleon demanded and received from Cavour the price of his aid—the cession of Savoy and Nice. This was perhaps inevit-

able; but it was unpopular in Italy, and it raised an outcry in England. If this was the way in which Napoleon treated his allies, his friendship was not worth keeping. There was no trusting the weathercock of Europe. He had already partly avenged his uncle's overthrow by his wars against Russia and Austria; would England or Prussia be his next victim? The fortifications which were being built at Cherbourg seemed to supply the answer. For forty years after the Congress of Vienna, England possessed the only strong navy in the world. But its apparent failure in the Crimean War had deeply impressed France, who had previously given up all thought of contesting its supremacy. Napoleon was determined to make France a maritime power. Though the French navy was smaller than ours, it contained an equal number of screw battleships, and Palmerston said that steam had bridged the channel. In 1859 Derby had revived the volunteers, who numbered 160,000 by May 1861. They did not disband when the panic subsided, but remained in existence until they were absorbed into the territorial system. Even historians were affected by the French scare: whenever Freeman wished to find a parallel for a deed of peculiar infamy, he compared it in detail with the seizure of Savoy and Nice.

It was when this anxiety was at its height that Cobden and Gladstone brought about a treaty with France by which the English duties on French wines and brandies, and the French duties on English manufactures, were reduced. Their objects were not only commercial: they were anxious to link together the two nations by the bonds of peaceful intercourse. "Like the builders of the Second Temple," wrote Gladstone many years later, "grasping their tool with one hand and the sword with the other, we with one hand established commercial relations with France of unexampled amity and closeness, while with the other we built ships, constructed fortifications, and founded volunteers, all with a silent, but well-understood and exclusive, view to an apprehended invasion from France." The

panic gradually diminished, but never quite died until the end of the Second Empire.

The American Civil War next claimed the attention of the ministry. The fundamental cause of this struggle was the determination of the Southerners to maintain and to extend slavery, and of the Northerners to stamp it out. In 1850 Jefferson Davis said "Slavery was established by decree of Almighty God," and soon afterwards the law courts decided that slavery was an essential part of the constitution, and must be protected by Congress throughout the Union. The presidential election of November 1860 resulted in the victory of Lincoln, who had stated that the United States could not remain half slave and half free. The Southern states were alarmed at his election, and in the following February announced their secession from the Union. This raised an issue which was quite separate from that of slavery, and it was on this question that Lincoln laid most stress. When he entered upon his term of office in March 1861 he declared that he was unwilling and unable to abolish slavery, but that he would not allow secession.

On the question of secession most influential Englishmen sympathised with the South. The press was almost unanimous in favour of the gentlemen of the South against the traders of the North. While the Southern states provided England with raw material and with a market for her manufactures, the North protected its growing industries against foreign competition. Some leading Englishmen, such as the Prince Consort, the Duke of Argyll, and John Bright, realised that the cause of the North was the cause of liberty, and the working classes never wavered in its support. But Americans judged English public opinion by the utterances of official statesmen, and by the leading articles of newspapers, which were uniformly friendly to the Confederates.

At the beginning of the war the Federal government proclaimed a blockade of the Southern ports. This step naturally dealt a blow to British trade; but its validity was recognised

by the Cabinet. The blockade was the cause of two events which led to much bad feeling between the Federalists and this country.

In November 1861, two Southern diplomatists who had made their way to a neutral port, and embarked on the British steamer *Trent*, were arrested on the high seas by the captain of a Federal warship. Lincoln at once saw that this action could not be defended; but Russell sent a peremptory demand for the release of the envoys, demanding a reply within seven days, and Palmerston ostentatiously made military preparations which he knew to be quite unnecessary. The matter was finally settled on Christmas Day, thanks largely to the previous exertions of the Prince Consort, who had died on December 14th. Northern feeling was well expressed in Lowell's lines:

> We give the critters back, John,
> Cos Abram thought 'twas right;
> It warn't your bullyin' clack, John,
> Provokin' us to fight.

The Confederates were unable to break the blockade, and retaliated by attacking Federal shipping with privateers. The most successful of these, including the notorious *Alabama*, were built in England. The *Alabama* was built on the Mersey, and was obviously meant for a commerce destroyer. Before she was ready for sea Charles Francis Adams, the Federal envoy, warned Russell of her character, and urged him to detain her for examination. Russell did not make up his mind to take this step until the *Alabama* had sailed (July 1862). For the next two years she was the scourge of Northern shipping, which she drove from the seas. She was Confederate only in name. Her guns, her gunners, and the majority of her crew were British; she flew the British flag until she was near her victim; and she used British ports as her bases. Russell obstinately refused redress for her depredations, and Adams finally postponed his claims to a more fitting time.

Palmerston, Russell, and Gladstone were now becoming

anxious for mediation. Lincoln still kept slavery in the background. "My paramount object," he said in August 1862, "is to save the Union, and it is not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slaves, I would do it." The interruption of the supply of Southern cotton had caused great distress in Lancashire; for in 1860 more than three-quarters of the cotton imported into England came from the U.S.A. By the end of 1862, half a million persons in the cotton districts were in receipt of relief. Subscriptions came in, not only from the colonies, but from foreign countries. The operatives bore their sufferings with exemplary patience, regarding them as their contribution towards emancipation. But the South had manfully held its own against the North, and seemed likely to do so indefinitely. Such an expensive and useless struggle ought to be ended, thought Palmerston, and he began discussing the possibility of intervention with Napoleon III. Gladstone publicly declared that the Southern states were to be regarded as a nation.

But in September 1862, Lincoln proclaimed the emancipation of all slaves in rebel States in the new year, and thus made English opinion much more favourably inclined towards him. This was also the turning-point of the struggle. The superior resources of the North were at last organised for war, and their armies were at last commanded by able generals. Henceforward they steadily wore down their opponents, and intervention was out of the question.

When the Civil War was over, England remained very unpopular throughout the U.S.A. The Southerners had been disappointed in their hope of mediation. The Northerners had not expected or desired help; but they had looked at least for sympathy. They were fighting for a principle; their cause was humanity; and they expected the approval of a country which had herself made such sacrifices for liberty, and which had so recently welcomed the birth of Italian freedom. Half a century later, England was destined to go to war in a similar cause, not

for mere self-interest, but for the sake of an ideal; and some Englishmen, at least, were to overlook the sympathy of many American citizens by reason of the severe correctness of their responsible statesmen. In both cases the country at war was too willing to attribute the strict neutrality of the other to mercenary considerations.

We know we've got a cause, John,
  Thet's honest, just, an' true;
We thought 'twould win applause, John,
  Ef nowheres else, from you.
    Ole Uncle S. sez he, "I guess
    His love of right," sez he,
"Hangs by a rotten fibre o' cotton.
    There's natur' in J.B.,
    Ez wal'z in you an' me!"

The American Civil War vitally affected England through the development of the iron-clad. In 1862 occurred the fight between the *Merrimac* and the *Monitor*. Seven years before, Armstrong had begun to revolutionise gun-making. Now began that duel between weapons of defence and offence which has lasted ever since, and which has entirely altered the conditions of war on land and sea. The tactics and even the weapons of the Crimean War were practically the same as those of Napoleon's time, and the warships differed materially from Nelson's only in their motive power. Henceforth the effective life of warships and of land fortifications was to be limited to a dozen years.

While the American Civil War was still in progress, a new and portentous figure appeared on the stage of European politics. In 1862 William I of Prussia found that he could not carry out his scheme of army reform against the opposition of the Chamber, and called Otto von Bismarck to his aid. In 1863 the Schleswig-Holstein question came to a head. Schleswig and Holstein were two duchies ruled over by the King of Denmark by a different title from that by which he held Denmark itself,

just as James I had different powers in England and Scotland, or George I in England and Hanover. Holstein was almost entirely German-speaking, and was a member of the German Confederation; while Schleswig contained a mixed population of Danes and Germans. The German Confederation, however, had long insisted that the duchies were indivisible. In 1863 the King of Denmark gave Holstein full autonomy, but incorporated Schleswig as an integral part of Denmark. This action aroused a tempest throughout Germany, of which Bismarck determined to take advantage. Russell advised Denmark to make concessions; but he did not make it clear that if she refused, she could expect no help from England. Palmerston tried to turn Bismarck from his purpose by threats. "There is no use," he said, "in disguising the fact that what is at the bottom of the German design is the dream of a German fleet, and the wish to get Kiel as a German seaport. That may be a good reason why they should wish it; but it is no reason why they should violate the rights and independence of Denmark. If any violent attempt were made to overthrow those rights and interfere with that independence, those who made the attempt would find in the result that it would not be Denmark alone with whom they would have to contend." The Danish Princess Alexandra had just been married to the Prince of Wales, and had already won the heart of the nation. The newspapers called on England to prevent the bullying of a small country by two big ones.

Bismarck went on his way undisturbed. With the help of Austria he occupied the duchies, and forced the Danes to admit their loss. Palmerston and Russell wanted to go to war; but the Cabinet refused. The 20,000 men England could put into the field would not have made the slightest difference to the issue, and France was unwilling to join in without the promise of territorial gains on the Rhine. England lost the prestige she had gained through her Italian policy. Palmerston's bluff had succeeded so often that he had been led to use threats which

he could not carry into effect, and which had been simply ignored.

This defeat was the last notable incident of Palmerston's life. He died on October 18th, 1865, at the age of 81.

Palmerston's reputation rests almost entirely on his foreign policy. He warmly supported the cause of freedom and of nationality. Belgium and Italy owed him a debt of gratitude, which they have repaid with interest. His antagonism to Russia was short-sighted, and led him to maintain the intolerable rule of Turkey in Europe. Towards the end of his career his interference became at once irritating and ineffective. He left Great Britain without a friend in the world.

His domestic policy was purely negative. He was well satisfied with things as they were, and refused to make timely concessions to democracy. During his own life-time the flood was stemmed; but after him came the deluge.

It has been said that Palmerston was his own party. He never fitted into the system of cabinet government. As a subordinate he was unruly and impatient of control; while as Prime Minister he often refused to give his colleagues his full support.

When one examines Palmerston's achievements, one is apt to wonder at the almost unparalleled influence he exerted over his contemporaries. The fact is that the man was greater than his work. He was a personality, not a party figure-head. He was decisive, imperious, self-reliant. His energy seemed boundless. He was in Parliament for nearly 60 years, and in office for nearly 50; and only in the last year of life did he show signs of failing powers. Genial and attractive in manner, he remained a schoolboy in spirit to the end. He knew how to take a beating, and never bore malice. He often laughed his opponents out of court instead of replying to their arguments; but his jests had no barb. We must not apply ordinary standards to a man whose natural cheerfulness was unclouded by 60 years of politics.

Palmerston's commanding influence had given a stability to English politics which they now lost. Earl Russell became Prime Minister, and Gladstone Leader of the Commons. They immediately brought in a Reform Bill. The steady improvement in material conditions, cheap newspapers, and the impression produced by the Italian and American Wars had given a stimulus to democracy. The artisans were more numerous, more prosperous, and better organised. Gladstone's free trade principles and his sympathy with Italy had drawn him into the movement.

This Reform Bill was attacked by many of the Whigs whose sympathy with democracy was lukewarm. John Bright gave the malcontents the name of Adullamites. "The right honourable gentleman," he said, referring to their nominal leader, Edward Horsman, "is the first of the new party who has retired into what may be called his political Cave of Adullam, and he has called about him every one that was in distress, and every one that was discontented." Disraeli allowed the opposition to the bill to be led by the Adullamites; but they were aided by the votes of the Conservative party, and in June 1866 the bill was thrown out.

Russell immediately resigned, and thenceforward took no active interest in politics, though he had twelve more years of life before him. His retirement was dignified and wise. In his early days he had rendered his country great services. He had introduced bills for the reform of the constitution, of local government, and of the poor law administration. He had sent Durham on the mission which laid the foundations of colonial self-government. But when he became Prime Minister, he had not the strength of character to keep the direction of affairs in his own hands. Having once been chief, he had not the greatness of spirit to serve under Aberdeen with cheerfulness. He showed more magnanimity than was expected of him in accepting office under Palmerston, of whose later foreign policy he shares the praise and the blame.

Derby and Disraeli once more formed a government resting on a minority in the Commons. The country had not taken any great interest in the Reform Bill; but its rejection led to a widespread agitation. On July 23rd, in spite of the prohibition of the Home Secretary, a crowd burst into Hyde Park to hold a reform meeting. Bright addressed huge meetings in the large provincial towns, and finished his campaign in London in December. There was no violence; but Disraeli was able to convince his colleagues that a measure of reform was inevitable, and that they might as well get the credit for it. To cut a complicated story short, in 1867 he passed a bill which gave the franchise to all householders and £10 lodgers in boroughs, and to £12 occupiers in counties. This measure admitted twice as many new electors as Gladstone's would have done. It conferred power on the artisan; the agricultural labourer had to wait another 17 years.

Disraeli's action in passing this act may be compared with Peel's abolition of the Corn Laws. There is no doubt that Disraeli had genuine popular sympathies. But though he boasted that he had "educated his party", it had not been prepared for such a sweeping measure. Disraeli, like Peel, abandoned the principles he had been chosen to support; but there was no one to treat him as he had treated Peel. The Conservatives gained some consolation from the thought that they had "dished the Whigs"; but they regarded the bill as a "leap in the dark", and they wondered where Disraeli meant to lead them.

While Parliamentary reform was being discussed in England, important events were taking place on the Continent. Schleswig had been occupied by Prussia, and Holstein by Austria, until their fate could be decided. Bismarck wanted both duchies for Prussia, and he was anxious to remodel the German constitution. In June 1866 he went to war with Austria and the rest of the Germanic Confederation. In July the Prussian army overwhelmed the Austrians at Königgrätz, and in August

Bismarck imposed his own terms on his opponents. Austria was expelled from Germany, and thenceforth turned her attention to the Balkan Peninsula. Of the North German states, some were annexed to Prussia, and the rest were forced to join the North German Confederation under her leadership. During this conflict Lord Derby's government had observed a strict neutrality.

In 1867 Englishmen were reminded of the perennial nature of the Irish question by a series of Fenian outrages which occurred in England itself. In February an intended outbreak at Chester was prevented by the vigilance of the authorities. In March, two Fenian prisoners were being driven in a prison van through the streets of Manchester, when they were rescued in broad daylight, after the policeman in charge of the van had been shot dead. In December, the explosion of a barrel of gunpowder destroyed part of the wall at Clerkenwell gaol, where some Fenians were imprisoned, and killed twelve people in the street outside.

Thus in 1868 Parliament was forced to turn its attention to Ireland, which had given no trouble since 1848. Derby resigned in February, owing to ill-health and old age, and Disraeli became Prime Minister in his stead. Gladstone insisted that the sources of Irish discontent should be removed, and succeeded in carrying resolutions for the disestablishment of the Irish Church. As soon as the new register was ready, Disraeli appealed to the country; but the Liberals gained a majority of over a hundred, and in December he resigned, without meeting the new Parliament.

A new period now began. The problems which had been shelved during the Palmerstonian truce demanded treatment. The two great parties advocated opposite solutions, and were no longer in favour of compromise. The sharper division between parties was typified in the duel between Gladstone and Disraeli. But before we can understand this struggle, we must examine the preceding history of Ireland.

CHAPTER VI

IRELAND 1800–1866

The Parliamentary Union between Great Britain and Ireland is little more than a century old. In 1800 Pitt secured the consent of the Irish Parliament to the Union[1], on the understanding that Roman Catholics, who already possessed the franchise, should be eligible for membership of the Parliament at Westminster. It has been seen that he was unable to redeem his promise, with the result that until 1829 the "Irish Question" meant the demand for Catholic Emancipation.

The economic position of the Irish peasant was miserable in the extreme. In the 18th century the population of Ireland had increased more rapidly than that of England, as the landlords had adopted the policy of dividing their land into very small holdings. This was only possible owing to the cultivation of the potato, which will feed eight men to the acre. But the average holding was only half an acre in extent. The tenant had first to pay a literal tenth of its produce to the minister of a religion which he considered heretical. Then he had to pay his rent—usually at the rate of £10. 10*s.* an acre—to a landlord who was almost certainly English, Protestant, and an absentee. His crop, too, was subject to blight. In bad years he would keep the best potatoes for food, and use the worst for seed, running counter to the laws of breeding. This process resulted in plants which had no strength to resist the disease of 1845.

The partial famines which were common between 1815 and 1830 induced landlords to reverse their previous policy, and to clear their estates. The evicted tenants had no right to relief, as Ireland had no Poor Law; so they flocked to the towns. Here

[1] Of the members who voted for the Union, only seven were unbribed.

there were no manufactures to provide work for the peasants, who died in swarms. Evictions led naturally in Ireland to agrarian crime. In 1821 a farmer named Shea evicted some cottiers. One night his house was set on fire, and he, his wife, his children, and his servants were driven into the flames. To put a stop to such outrages, the government had recourse to exceptional powers of a type which was common in the 19th century. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and the Lord Lieutenant was given the power to "proclaim" districts, in which persons who carried arms, or ventured out between sunset and sunrise, might be transported for seven years. Such a policy rendered necessary the presence of an army of occupation larger than that which garrisoned India, and this force was insufficient to keep the peace. Ireland was, in fact, still ruled as a conquered country.

The Irish peasant supported the movement for Catholic Emancipation for the reasons which made the English artisan support the Reform Bill. The troubles of both were economic; but they were demanding a political reform, from which they would not benefit directly. The English working man was not enfranchised by the Reform Bill, and the Irish cottier (who already had the vote) had small chance of becoming a Member of Parliament. They both felt, however, that their distress was largely due to the existence of bad laws and the need of good ones; and so they believed that they must win political before economic freedom. At last the Irish found their champion in O'Connell.

Daniel O'Connell was born in Kerry in 1775. The only education his native country could give him was at a hedge-school, after which he proceeded to the Catholic seminary at St Omer. Here he imbibed a hatred of revolutionary ideas and methods which made him the most law-abiding of agitators. "All work for Ireland," he said, "must be done honestly and above board." He was one of the first to take advantage of the throwing open of the Irish Bar to Roman Catholics in 1792,

and soon made his mark as a "Counsellor". Whenever a political trial took place, O'Connell was sent for. No one was so well qualified to instruct an ignorant judge on a point of law, or to expose the perjury of a Crown witness. The very sight of his burly figure entering the court struck terror into the hearts of informers. Often, when he came in from the hunting-field, he was waited upon by disputants who wanted him to arbitrate between them. His award was final: the losing party never dreamt of appealing to the law courts.

In 1823 O'Connell helped to found the Catholic Association, of which he soon became the leader. The Association met in Dublin, and held debates on matters of national interest, to which the public were admitted. Funds were raised throughout the country by the "Catholic rent" of a penny a month. In 1825 the government passed a bill to suppress the Association; but it was easily evaded by a lawyer like O'Connell.

When the Canningites left Wellington's cabinet in 1828, Vesey-Fitzgerald was made President of the Board of Trade, and had to seek re-election for County Clare. Though a Protestant, he had steadily voted for Catholic Emancipation, and was one of the most popular landlords in Ireland. O'Connell, however, determined to show the government his power by contesting the seat. He understood that though the law prevented a Roman Catholic from sitting in Parliament, it did not prevent him from receiving votes and being returned by the sheriff. The excitement in Ireland was intense. £28,000 was subscribed in ten days for O'Connell's election expenses. When the polling began, the peasants marched in military array, with their priests at their head, and voted for him almost to a man. Vesey-Fitzgerald gave up the contest after five days' polling, and O'Connell was declared duly elected. He did not expect to be allowed to take his seat; but he had forced the hand of the government. Ireland was divided into two well-organised camps; for the Orangemen also were armed and disciplined. In September 1828 O'Connell told the Roman Catholics to stop

drilling. The instant obedience paid him showed Wellington how well his followers were controlled. Agrarian crime entirely ceased. Such calm in Ireland was unnatural and ominous. Finally, as we have seen (p. 20), Wellington and Peel were forced to carry Catholic Emancipation (April 1829). Roman Catholics were granted all civil rights save admission to a very few high offices. They were still excluded from posts in colleges and schools in England, and from membership of Irish corporations.

The revolt of the cottiers, who had previously been driven to the poll like cattle, induced the government to disfranchise them by raising the freehold qualification in Ireland from 40*s.* to £10. Nor was O'Connell allowed to take his seat without a fresh election, and George IV went out of his way to be rude to him. It is possible that the bill would not have obtained the assent of the King and the Lords without these restrictions; but they took away its healing character. £5,000 was collected for O'Connell's new election; but no one dared oppose him. (It is well to remember that O'Connell now devoted himself entirely to the service of his country, and gave up his work at the Bar, which brought him in £8,000 a year.) He now felt that he owed no gratitude to the ministry, and openly avowed his intention of repealing the Union.

The next grievance to be attacked was the tithe system. The Church of a tenth of the population was mainly supported by the forced contributions of the other nine-tenths. Many of the clergy of the Church of Ireland were absentees who simply drew their salaries, leaving the work to be done by curates at £20 a year. In 1830 and 1831 non-payment of tithe was general. A strong force of police and troops was necessary to seize the goods or cattle of a defaulter, and no one could be found to bid for them when they were put up to auction. Pitched battles were frequent, and Sydney Smith estimated that the collection of tithe in Ireland must have cost a million lives. In 1832 tithe composition was made compulsory, much to O'Connell's disgust. The country remained in a state of terrible disorder.

In 1835 Melbourne's government was so weak that it was compelled to come to terms with O'Connell. The latter promised to let repeal alone for the time if the Whigs would carry certain reforms. They failed to pass their measures through the Lords in their original form, but something was done. Tithe was made a permanent rent charge at 75 per cent. of its nominal value; the English Poor Law system was extended to Ireland, where it was very unpopular, but fairly successful; and a £10 franchise was established in Irish corporations. This was the period of Thomas Drummond's Under-Secretaryship. He strove to keep the balance between parties and sects, to rule Ireland without exceptional powers, and to establish respect for the law. He made the most of a bad system, but killed himself in the effort. He died in 1840, and the Whigs resigned office the next year.

Though O'Connell had long seen that his association with the Whigs was of little value, he had loyally observed the compact. Now that Peel was in office, he had little to hope from Parliamentary activity. The "Young Ireland" movement, of a literary and idealistic nature, was just beginning, and unless he wished to lose the lead, he must put forward another programme. He accordingly announced that 1843 would be the Repeal Year. At the time there was no outstanding practical grievance to be remedied; but he could appeal to national sentiment and to ancient wrongs. He went about the country addressing enormous meetings in the open air: one of them was estimated to consist of half a million persons. O'Connell was probably the greatest mob orator in British history. His massive physique, his rich and powerful voice, and his intimate knowledge of the Irish character enabled him to do what he liked with his audience. One moment his hearers would be laughing uproariously at his humour; the next, they would be quietly sobbing while he described the massacre of Drogheda or the penal laws so vividly that they felt them as personal injuries. Then he would rouse them to a fury of rage by asking if the country which had inflicted

these wrongs on their ancestors was to have the power to inflict like wrongs on their children.

The circumstances seemed not unfavourable. Peel had not changed his views on Catholic Emancipation in 1829, but had been coerced into granting it by a show of force. Parliament had only just given self-government to Canada, which had been in open rebellion in 1837. But the House of Commons, which had been in favour of Catholic claims in 1829, was now determined to maintain the Union. Peel concentrated troops in Ireland, and the Lord Lieutenant forbade a meeting which had been arranged at Clontarf for Sunday, October 8th, 1843. O'Connell undoubtedly meant to give the government the impression that he was ready to use force; but, as has been said, his instincts were against such a course, and he issued a proclamation postponing the meeting. He was instantly obeyed; but his power was gone. He had led his country to expect a glorious fight for liberty, and this result was an anti-climax. In 1844 he was tried before Protestant judges and a Protestant jury, improperly empanelled. The indictment was nearly a hundred yards long, and he was found guilty; but the verdict was reversed by the House of Lords. After his release his health gave way, and in 1847 he died on his way to Rome.

Though Peel was resolved to preserve the Union, he was anxious to remove grievances which he knew to be real. One of these was the backward state of higher education. In 1845 Ireland possessed only two colleges:—the Roman Catholic seminary at Maynooth, and Trinity College, Dublin, where Roman Catholics might graduate, but not hold scholarships or professorships. Maynooth suffered from lack of funds: the buildings were poor, the professors were underpaid, and the accommodation for students was bad. Peel proposed that the government grant to Maynooth should be increased from £9,000 a year to £26,000. His bill excited a storm of bigotry; but he succeeded in carrying it. At the same time he established the three Queen's Colleges in the north, west, and south, with

a grant of £7,000 each. These colleges imposed no religious tests, and were therefore distasteful to Protestants and Roman Catholics alike.

But the main grievance was the land, which concerned nearly every inhabitant of a country which had few manufactures. In 1843 Peel had appointed a Commission under the presidency of Lord Devon, which reported in 1845. Under the old tribal system, the land was regarded as the property of the community. The head of the sept was not its owner, but simply its managing director. The English conquest had introduced English ideas of property, by which the landlord was regarded as the sole owner of the land. The Irish tenants still clung to the traditional view that the land belonged to them equally with the landlord; but the law took no account of their standpoint. The Commissioners found that, except in Ulster, practically all Irish occupiers were tenants at will. The Irish landlord, moreover, unlike the English landlord, supplied nothing but the land. The farm and out-houses, the fences, gates, and drains had to be constructed by the tenant. If the latter worked hard at his holding and improved its value, the landlord might demand a higher rent, and evict him if he refused to pay. This system obviously discouraged the tenant from exerting himself to the utmost, since his labour would only benefit the landlord. The Commissioners reported that agriculture was in a very unsatisfactory condition, and that seven-tenths of the population lived in huts which were unfit for human habitation.

In Ulster a very different state of things existed. There the tenant held his land by "Ulster right", by which he could not be evicted as long as he paid his customary rent. If he gave up his farm, he received compensation for the improvements he had made, and he had the right to transfer his farm to another tenant on payment of a reasonable fine. In Ulster, alone in Ireland, the tenantry flourished.

Though the Devon Commission consisted of Irish land-owners, and had been appointed by a Conservative government,

it did not shrink from the plain moral of these facts. It recommended that tenants throughout Ireland should be compensated on eviction or raising of rents. Stanley introduced a bill to this effect in the Upper House; but the Lords would have none of it, and it had to be withdrawn.

Peel never had another opportunity of dealing with the matter. In the autumn of 1845 the Irish potato crop was a failure. This, as we have seen, hastened the repeal of the Corn Laws in June 1846. To deal with the famine and unemployment, Peel bought large quantities of Indian corn, which was sold at a penny a pound, and started public works. The disease reappeared in 1846, when three-quarters of the crop failed. Famine, as usual, was accompanied by pestilence. An eye-witness described a certain village thus :—"The survivors were like walking skeletons, the men gaunt and haggard, stamped with the livid mark of hunger, the children crying with pain, the women in some of the cabins too weak to stand. All the sheep were gone, all the cows, all the poultry killed—only one pig left—the very dogs which had barked at me before had disappeared." So widespread was the distress that it was impossible to enforce the labour test. "The roads which it was decided to make were blocked by the labourers employed upon them, and by the stones which the labourers were supposed to crush for their repair." Russell accordingly gave up the public works in the summer of 1847, and instituted relief committees, which supported over 3,000,000 persons. The cost of this relief was partly borne by the local rates, and many landlords determined to diminish their liabilities by evicting their tenants. In one month alone in 1847, 6,000 notices were served in a single Union. Of the wretches thus thrown upon the world at such a time, some perished by the roadside of hunger or famine fever, others went over to England, and hundreds of thousands crossed the Atlantic. Huddled together in crazy "coffin-ships" without doctors or medicine, the emigrants fell easy victims to the disease they carried with them. It is estimated that 17 per cent.

of them perished on the voyage, and many more died shortly after landing. The survivors cherished a bitter hatred against England, since they believed that the horrors of the famine had been accentuated by the blunders of the administration. The Irish peasant lived on the produce of his potato-patch; but he paid his rent by growing oats, barley, and wheat for the English market. In 1845 3,225,000 quarters of cereals were exported from Ireland—enough to feed the whole population for six months. It seemed to many observers that if the government had prohibited the export of food, and suspended, or even paid, rents, much suffering would have been avoided.

The Registrar-General estimated that 729,033 persons died of hunger. From that time the population of Ireland has steadily declined. When the famine broke out, it was about 8,300,000; by 1851 it had fallen to 6,550,000; and at the end of the century it was only 4,475,000. Even before the famine the country had been over-populated, and it was becoming less and less able to support its inhabitants. After the repeal of the Corn Laws they could no longer expect high prices for their grain. Their labour was becoming less necessary at harvest time in England owing to the introduction of agricultural machinery. Many of the landlords found that they could not pay the high rates of the famine years, and sold their estates. The new landlords regarded their purchase as a commercial speculation, and were governed by economic considerations. They found that it was more profitable to produce meat for the English market than to divide their land among cottiers, whom they therefore evicted. Thus from the time of the famine there was a continuous flow of emigrants to the United States.

One result of the famine and evictions was a serious increase of agrarian crime. Over two hundred persons were murdered in 1847, and the assassins could rarely be brought to justice. At the end of the year Russell passed a stringent Coercion Act, which put an end to the reign of terror. The French Revolution of 1848 induced the Young Ireland party to organise an insur-

rection. The government acted with vigour, arrested and deported the leaders, and nipped in the bud a movement which would have had little chance of success. For nearly twenty years Ireland was sunk in the apathy of despair.

The revival of the Irish question was due to the new Ireland which had grown up in America. When the famine emigrants left their native shores, they did not cease to be Irishmen. They still clung to the hope of freeing their country, and formed secret societies with that object. Of these the most important was the Fenian Brotherhood, which took its name from the retainers of the legendary heroes of Ireland. Many Fenians gained military experience in the American Civil War, and at its close they determined to bring about a rising. In the autumn of 1865 many of them came over to Ireland. The government, however, was well served by its spies, and arrested most of the leaders. In February 1866 the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act passed through all its stages in a single day, and all danger from Ireland itself was averted. In May an attempted invasion of Canada proved a complete failure, and Fenianism seemed to have shot its bolt.

In 1867, however, the Fenians were responsible for the acts which have already been mentioned (p. 92). The trial of the "Manchester martyrs", who were condemned for the murder of the policeman, attracted considerable attention. Their regret for his death (which was really accidental), their youth, and their obvious sincerity and courage made a deep impression on many Englishmen who had previously given little thought to the Irish problem. Gladstone, in particular, was led to a serious examination of the question. He was a member of a Conservative cabinet when Ireland had last demanded the attention of Parliament, and his political views had changed considerably since then. He now came to the conclusion that a determined effort must be made to remove Irish grievances, and the electorate allowed him to make the attempt.

CHAPTER VII

ENGLAND AND IRELAND FROM GLADSTONE'S FIRST MINISTRY TO THE GENERAL ELECTION OF 1885

THE death of Palmerston and the retirement of Derby and Russell left the field clear for the duel between Gladstone and Disraeli. Seldom has there been such a contrast between two rival statesmen. They were both great orators and skilful Parliamentary tacticians; but there the resemblance ended. Gladstone's oratory had to be heard to be fully appreciated, partly because of his intense earnestness, partly because of his lengthy parentheses and qualifications, which seem involved in print, but which his perfect elocution made perfectly clear when spoken. Disraeli's speeches abounded in terse, pithy epigrams, which make them still worth reading. Gladstone's passion and lack of humour made him a victim to the booby-traps of the more irresponsible of his opponents, whom he always took seriously; Disraeli was always cool, inscrutable, sarcastic.

There was a deeper difference between the two men. Gladstone had thought of entering the Church, and had embraced politics only because he thought he could thereby do more good. His sense of duty occasionally seemed priggish, and his conscience was so sensitive that many plain, blunt men regarded him as a Jesuit. Disraeli was frankly ambitious, and regarded politics as a means of gaining distinction. Gladstone loved the business of administration, and was at his best when explaining a complicated measure; Disraeli was bored by details, and shone in destructive criticism. Gladstone's interests were domestic, and he was opposed to intervention in foreign affairs, save on behalf of oppressed nationalities; Disraeli was jealous of

England's reputation abroad, but wasted little sympathy on small nations. Gladstone spent most of his political life in office, and was not a success in opposition; Disraeli rendered his party great services in the days of its adversity, and did not acquire real power until he was an old man.

When, in December 1868, Gladstone was required to form a cabinet, he was able to secure the aid of a body of remarkably brilliant men. One of them, John Bright, was the first Nonconformist and the first representative of working men to sit in the cabinet. Now that the question of the franchise had been settled, the Liberal party was once more united, and was anxious for far-reaching reform after the Palmerstonian calm. For the first time since the fall of Peel, there was a government with a large and compact majority.

Gladstone had said that Ireland was overshadowed by the three branches of a upas tree—an alien Church, the land laws, and the lack of a proper system of education. He now proceeded to deal with these grievances. Even strong Anglicans found it difficult to defend the established Church of Ireland. In only four of the 33 dioceses of Ireland did its members form 20 per cent. of the population. Gladstone's bill of 1869 severed the tie between the protestant episcopal church in Ireland and the government, and made it a self-governing corporation, enjoying rather less than half its former revenue. The surplus was to be devoted to "the relief of unavoidable calamity and suffering not touched by the poor law."

The Devon Commission had shown that the Irish land system was directly responsible for slackness, misery and terrorism; but all efforts to carry its recommendations into effect had failed. Parliament had abandoned *laissez faire* principles in its factory legislation; but it was unwilling to interfere with property in land. This was what Gladstone now proposed to do. In February 1870 he explained his land bill in a speech which lasted over three hours. The main principle was that a landlord who evicted a tenant would have to compensate him for disturbance

and for unexhausted improvements. This Land Act did not give the tenant security of tenure, or protect him against raised rents, and Gladstone allowed landlords to contract out of its provisions in the case of holdings worth more than £50 a year. Though in practice its machinery did not work very well, it at least marks the beginning of attempts to deal with a serious question.

The third great Irish difficulty was the state of higher education. The "Godless colleges" set up by Peel in 1845 were unpopular. Roman Catholics were now admitted to fellowships at Trinity College, Dublin; but they demanded an endowed university of their own. In 1873 Gladstone brought in a scheme which was thrown out by the Commons; so that the problem remained unsettled.

Gladstone's cabinet did not confine its attention to Ireland: it passed many important measures which concerned England. The educational policy of the government will be discussed later (p. 152); it is sufficient to state here that Forster's Education Bill of 1870 established a national system of elementary education, and that in 1871 all religious tests at Oxford and Cambridge were abolished.

In 1870–1 Cardwell reorganised the army. When he went to the War Office, the British army consisted of long-service men. The war between Austria and Prussia in 1866 had shown that a soldier could be made efficient in three years, and that a big reserve was necessary. Cardwell accordingly reduced the period of enlistment to 12 years, of which six were to be spent in the ranks if the regiment was going abroad, and three if it was stationed at home, the rest of the period being spent in the reserve. Up to this time an infantry or cavalry officer was forced to buy not only his original commission, but each step up to the rank of Lt.-Colonel, except when vacancies occurred through death. Such a system obviously gave money more weight than ability, and it was now abolished. The Commander-in-Chief was deprived of his semi-independent position, and was placed under the control of the Secretary for War.

In 1872 Gladstone accepted a principle against which he had voted in his first session, over 40 years before, and passed the Ballot Act. This measure, which had long been demanded by Radicals, was denounced by its opponents as cowardly, degrading, and un-English. Common-sense at last triumphed. It was notorious that open voting meant that pressure was brought to bear by the employer upon the workman, by the landlord upon the tenant, by the customer upon the tradesman. Without the ballot, democratic forms were a mockery. While secret voting did not entirely do away with bribery and intimidation, it rendered them less effective.

One of the busiest members of a busy cabinet was Lord Granville, who became Foreign Secretary on July 6th, 1870, on the death of Lord Clarendon. Before the end of the month, the Franco-Prussian War had broken out. Napoleon III knew that his throne was safe only so long as he maintained the prestige of France. That prestige had been tarnished by the failure of his Mexican enterprise, and by the astounding success of Prussia in 1866. In 1859 France had beaten Austria, but not decisively; in 1866 Prussia had crushed her in seven weeks. Before the war, Bismarck had secured an assurance of French neutrality in return for territorial compensation. After the war, he had refused to carry out his promise. Napoleon had been tricked into allowing the establishment of a strong North German Confederation, and he was anxious for revenge. Convinced that war was inevitable, Bismarck determined to make France appear the aggressor, so as to gain the help of the South German states. Gladstone and Granville did what they could for peace; but on July 19th, 1870, France declared war.

English opinion regarded Napoleon as the disturber of the peace, and the old dread of his designs was revived when on July 25th Bismarck published in the *Times* a draft treaty of 1867, by which France was to have been given Belgium as the reward of her neutrality in 1866. The cabinet at once concluded treaties with both France and Prussia, to the effect that if either

belligerent violated Belgian neutrality, Great Britain would help the other in its defence alone.

Though Englishmen were still anxious for neutrality, the reverses experienced by France roused their sympathy. Russia was also becoming alarmed at the overwhelming success of her western neighbour. After the fall of Metz, however, Bismarck played a card which prevented the possibility of joint action by England and Russia. He persuaded Prince Gorchakoff, the Russian Chancellor, that the time was favourable for the repudiation of the clause of the Treaty of Paris which forbade Russia to keep warships in the Black Sea, or to construct arsenals on its coasts. It was for this clause that Palmerston had prolonged the Crimean War for nine months; though obviously it could not be maintained when Russia had regained her strength; and though he himself did not expect it to last more than ten years. France, Austria and Italy had already informed Russia that they would not object to its abrogation; so that only England remained to be reckoned with, and England was involved in a dispute with America. Prince Gorchakoff accordingly addressed a circular to the powers on October 31st, 1870, stating that the Tsar could "no longer consider himself bound to the terms of the Treaty of Paris, 1856, in so far as these limit his rights of sovereignty in the Black Sea." Granville was in no position to object to the substance of this declaration; but he took strong exception to its form. He insisted that what had been established by the powers could only be annulled by them in concert, and that one of the signatories had no right to tear up part of the treaty. As a result of his remonstrance, a conference was summoned to meet in London in December, which released Russia from the distasteful restriction. This conference was little more than a solemn farce, as it was known that Russia would not take "No" for an answer; but Bismarck's object had been attained. On January 28th, 1871, Paris was forced to surrender, and in February preliminaries of peace were signed, by which France ceded Alsace and Eastern

Lorraine, and paid an enormous indemnity. Ten days before the fall of Paris, the new German Empire, which included South Germany, had been proclaimed in the Galerie des Glaces at Versailles.

It has just been said that England was at this time engaged in a dispute with the U.S.A. It will be remembered that the American minister in London had been forced to postpone the case of the *Alabama* owing to the uncompromising attitude adopted by Russell. When the Civil War was over, the United States government began to press its demands; but no agreement had been reached when Gladstone became Prime Minister. This time it was the Americans who were unreasonable. One of their leading statesmen held that the exploits of the *Alabama* had encouraged the South to prolong the war, and that Great Britain ought to pay £400,000,000 damages! Others would have been content with the cession of Canada and the British West Indies! It was finally agreed to submit the case of the *Alabama* and the other English-built commerce-destroyers to a tribunal of five persons appointed by Great Britain, the United States, Italy, Brazil, and Switzerland. In June 1872 the arbitrators met at Geneva, and in September they awarded the United States £3,250,000 damages. To most Englishmen this sum seemed excessive; but it can hardly be doubted that it was desirable to end a quarrel between the two great English-speaking nations without having recourse to war. Henceforth the relations between England and America steadily improved.

The Reform Bill of 1867, like the Reform Bill of 1832, was followed by a period of legislative activity. In 1873, as in 1839, the country was growing tired of the reforming energy of the government, and longed for a period of rest. Each of Gladstone's measures had alienated some particular interest. Churchmen and Nonconformists, army officers and brewers, landlords and lawyers had all been disturbed. The more timid Liberals were finding the pace too hot, and were inclined to cry "Halt!" The foreign policy of the government had not added to its popularity.

It is hard to see what other course it could have followed with regard to the Franco-Prussian War, Gorchakoff's note, or the *Alabama* claims; but their cumulative effect was to make many feel that England's influence had sunk very low, and that foreign powers were not afraid to flout her. Finally, in three or four instances Gladstone had broken the spirit of the law while obeying its letter. His subtle mind had led him to avoid difficulties by expedients which seemed dishonest to the ordinary man. The by-elections went steadily against the government. Disraeli was not blind to the growing weakness of his opponents. "As I sit opposite the treasury bench," he said, "the ministers remind me of one of those marine landscapes not very unusual on the coasts of South America. You behold a range of exhausted volcanoes. Not a flame flickers upon a single pallid crest. But the situation is still dangerous. There are occasional earthquakes, and ever and anon the dark rumblings of the sea."

In January 1874, Gladstone advised the Queen to dissolve Parliament and put an end to a false position. His administration had done much good work; but its vitality was exhausted. He issued a programme of financial reforms which included the abolition of the income tax, a scheme he had long entertained. The country, however, was in a Conservative frame of mind, and gave Disraeli a comfortable majority over Liberals and Home Rulers combined.

The Conservatives were in power for the first time since 1846. Since that year they had been in office three times; but on each occasion they had been in a minority in the Commons. Their success was due not only to the mistakes of their opponents but to the leadership of Disraeli, who had really educated them in opposition. In 1872 he had defined the aims of the Conservative party as "the maintenance of our institutions, the preservation of our empire, and the improvement of the condition of the people." This statement was not a platitude in those days: each of these objects had to be fought for.

When Disraeli urged the country to maintain its institutions, he was not simply attacking Gladstone's policy of rapid change: he was thinking of the Crown. For ten years after the death of the Prince Consort, the Queen had lived in retirement, and had rarely shown herself in public. This seclusion, at first viewed with sympathy, gradually caused a decline in her popularity. Some newspapers hinted that her motive was parsimony, and urged that her income was given her by Parliament to maintain her royal dignity. Anti-monarchical sentiments were fast spreading among the working classes, and a prominent Radical openly declared in the House that he was a Republican. Though Disraeli was well aware that the Queen took a deep interest in the business of government, he was anxious for her to come more before the public, lest the prestige of the monarchy should suffer. Before he became Prime Minister, the tide had begun to turn. In February 1872, the Queen attended a thanksgiving service at St Paul's for the recovery of the Prince of Wales from a serious illness, and from that time her popularity steadily increased. This gave Disraeli the utmost satisfaction on political, as well as on personal, grounds.

His gospel of Imperialism also ran counter to the tendencies of the age. In 1871 the *Times* viewed with equanimity the prospect of our surrendering Canada to the U.S.A. Disraeli, however, realised that a new type of political organism was coming into existence. He urged the necessity of binding together in a federation the free communities which formed the Empire. It is true that he never attempted to establish machinery for that purpose; but such an attempt would have been premature in his day. The machinery would have been useless without the spirit, and the growth of the spirit was largely due to him.

His desire to improve the condition of the working classes was no mere device to gain the votes they had just received. Years before he had depicted the squalor of their surroundings in *Sybil*, and he had little sympathy with the individualism which

was still the creed of most Liberals. His government passed measures protecting Trade Unions, helping Friendly Societies, codifying factory legislation, and instituting the "Plimsoll" line for merchant ships. It also made the first attempt to deal with the housing problem as one which affected the nation, not merely the locality. Many of these measures did not go far enough, and had to be strengthened later; but Disraeli's motto was *Festina lente.*

The main interest, however, of Disraeli's ministry lies in his foreign policy. On Nov. 25th, 1875, it was announced that 176,000 shares in the Suez Canal had been bought by the government from the Khedive, at a cost of £4,000,000. The total number of shares was 400,000, and most of the remainder were held by Frenchmen. Disraeli saw, as Napoleon had seen before him, that Egypt was the key to India, and he was determined that France should not establish herself there. As a commercial speculation his action was a great success: the shares now pay a dividend of about 25 per cent. on their original cost. As a political step, it was bound to be viewed with jealousy by France, and it ultimately led to the English occupation of Egypt, which caused much friction between the two countries. Disraeli probably foresaw these consequences; but he did not shrink from taking a decisive step.

It was at Disraeli's suggestion that the Prince of Wales visited India in 1875. Such a step was unprecedented; but it proved a striking success. On the Prince's return in 1876, Disraeli suggested that the Queen should assume the style of Empress of India. In spite of much opposition in Parliament, on January 1st, 1877, the Queen's new title was proclaimed at a magnificent Durbar at Delhi. The imagination of the people of India was touched; they now felt that they had a ruler of their own; and their acclamations fully justified Disraeli's foresight.

By this time the "Eastern Question" had once more disturbed the peace of Europe. Before Disraeli assumed office, the work

of the Crimean War had been undone. Moldavia and Wallachia, which had been separated at Paris, had joined together to form the state of Rumania. Serbia was no longer garrisoned by the Turks. The neutralisation of the Black Sea was a thing of the past. Nothing had been done to give effect to the promises of reform glibly made by the Porte, and trustfully accepted by the powers. Russia had fully regained her strength, and stood in the same position relative to Turkey as before the Crimean War.

Ever since the Congress of Paris, revolts had broken out from time to time in different provinces of the Ottoman Empire. In 1875 the Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who were treated as serfs by their Mohammedan lords, and ground down by the exactions of the tax-farmers, rose in rebellion. Austria was alarmed at this outbreak on her borders, and induced Russia and Prussia to join her in demanding that Turkey should introduce reforms in her government of these districts. Disraeli, however, was satisfied with the mere promises of the Porte. The insurgents insisted on more substantial guarantees, and the movement spread. In April 1876 a rebellion broke out in Bulgaria, where a literary revival had begun to awaken national feeling from the slumber of centuries. The three Emperors agreed to force a two months' armistice on the belligerents, to give time for a settlement in which the representatives of the great powers were to take part. France and Italy approved of the plan; but Disraeli said that Great Britain would not be a party to the coercion of Turkey, and moved the Mediterranean fleet to Besika Bay. His resistance broke up the concert of Europe, which alone could have brought the Turks to see reason. The policy of non-intervention, which was sound in dealing with European states proper, was inapplicable to Turkey, which only existed by reason of the support of the powers.

Disraeli's action encouraged the Porte to put down the Bulgarian rising in its own way. Bashi-Bazouks were let loose on the unhappy country to murder and destroy. At Batak,

which had a population of 7,000, some 5,000 persons were massacred, of whom 1,000 were driven into the church, which was set on fire. The news of these outrages sent a shudder throughout Christendom. Serbia and Montenegro declared war on Turkey. Gladstone, who had retired from political life in 1875, leaving Lord Hartington as leader of the opposition in the Commons, came out of his retirement. "The outrages and massacres in Bulgaria," he said, "were not the acts of the Bashi-Bazouks, or the Regulars, or of the Mussulman population, except as mere instruments of the Porte. These massacres were not accident, they were not caprice, they were not passion. They were system, they were method, they were policy, they were principle." The actual perpetrators "remained unpunishable, free, rewarded, decorated. They acted in obedience to orders—written orders in some cases—and from the highest authorities."

Disraeli treated the first reports of the massacres with a levity which shocked many of his supporters, and even when they were confirmed by the British Commissioner, he refused to let them make any difference to his policy. Lord Derby, however, the Foreign Secretary, was untiring in his efforts for peace, and it was largely owing to him that a conference met at Constantinople in December 1876, to which Lord Salisbury went as the British representative. The Turks, relying on the support of England, rejected the terms proposed by the conference. They had strong grounds for their confidence in the public utterances of the Prime Minister, who had been made Earl of Beaconsfield in August, and who was now reviving the Russian bogey. Lord Derby told the Turkish ambassador that he had instructed Lord Salisbury not to give Great Britain's consent to any coercive measures against the Porte, and he sent as ambassador to Constantinople a diplomatist who was known to be friendly to Turkey.

Russia had honourably endeavoured to work in harmony with the other powers on behalf of peoples of her own religion

and her own blood. Beaconsfield's policy left her no option but to take the field single-handed, as she had done in 1828. In June 1877, the Russians crossed the Danube, and were soon masters of the passes over the Balkans. Their further progress was hindered by the heroic defence of Plevna, upon their flank. At last, after a five months' siege, the fortress fell in December, and the Russians poured through the passes and took Adrianople (Jan. 1878). The road to Constantinople was now open, and the Turks were forced to make peace at San Stefano (March 1878).

Opinion in England was much divided on these events. Neither the ministry nor the opposition was unanimous as to the course which should be followed. In May 1877, Gladstone proposed a resolution that by her misgovernment Turkey had lost all claim to either the material or the moral support of England; but he was defeated by 131 votes. By their gallant resistance at Plevna the Turks had almost erased the memory of the Bulgarian atrocities. Beaconsfield saw that the steady advance of Russia in Asia was threatening India, and he was determined that she should not get Constantinople. After the fall of Adrianople, the British fleet was moved to the Sea of Marmora, nominally to protect British subjects. Beaconsfield objected strongly to the terms of the Treaty of San Stefano. Of these the most important was the creation of a "big Bulgaria", with a sea-coast on the Aegean as well as the Black Sea. The other Slav[1] states, Serbia and Montenegro, were enlarged; but the claims of the non-Slav states—Rumania, Greece, and Albania—were ignored. The Treaty of San Stefano would have established many Balkan Alsace-Lorraines. This consideration had little weight with Beaconsfield, who was indifferent to the fate of small nationalities. He viewed with alarm, however, the establishment of a big Bulgaria, which, he felt certain, would be the tool of Russia, and the base for her next attempt on Constantinople. He therefore insisted that

[1] At this time the Bulgars were regarded as Slavs.

the treaty should be submitted to a congress for revision, and when Russia refused, he summoned Indian troops to Malta[1].

Beaconsfield's firmness at last induced Russia to agree to a congress, which met at Berlin in June 1878. Lord Derby had resigned in March and had been succeeded as Foreign Secretary by Lord Salisbury; Beaconsfield and Salisbury attended the congress as the representatives of Great Britain.

The Congress of Berlin limited the autonomous state of Bulgaria to the district between the Danube and the Balkans. The rest of Bulgaria proper, south of the Balkans, was placed under a Christian governor, and called East Rumelia. (A few years later, it was incorporated in Bulgaria.) The boundaries of Serbia and Montenegro were enlarged, and their independence was formally recognised. Rumania was also recognised as an independent state; but she was forced to cede Bessarabia to Russia in return for the barren Dobrudja. Bosnia and Herzegovina were placed under the administration of Austria, and Cyprus under that of Great Britain, who undertook to protect the Asiatic dominions of Turkey. The Porte once more promised full civil and religious liberty to its subjects.

Though the states whose independence was recognised at Berlin owed their freedom mainly to Russia, they soon showed that they would not submit to the dictation of their benefactor. Their rapid increase in wealth and population, and their steady absorption of Western civilisation, at least on its material side, made them a far more formidable barrier to Russian ambition than the decaying Ottoman Empire had been.

[1] The English newspapers clamoured for war, and a popular music-hall song contained the lines:

"We don't want to fight; but, by Jingo, if we do,
We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too!"

Hence the term *Jingoism*. The word was new, but the blustering attitude it denoted was old, and not peculiar to the British people.

The Treaty was very popular in England. When Beaconsfield returned to London, the station was decorated in his honour, and cheering crowds escorted him to the Foreign Office, from a window of which he made them a speech. This was the high-water mark of his popularity. In 1879 the disasters of Isandhlwana and Kabul (pp. 211 and 262), the latter directly attributable to his opposition to Russia's European policy, made men weary of Imperialism. Trade was bad, and the harvest of 1879 was the worst of the century. Since 1875 the improved communication with America had produced a collapse of agricultural prices. The general depression made the country lend a ready ear to Gladstone's denunciations of the government. Chamberlain had studied American electoral methods, which he used with effect in the general election of March 1880.

In the autumn of 1879 Gladstone accepted the invitation of the Liberals of Midlothian to contest the seat, which was usually Conservative. On November 24th, he travelled from Liverpool to Edinburgh, where he was given an enthusiastic reception. For a week he made speech after speech, in spite of the bad weather. In March 1880, he went from King's Cross to Edinburgh, giving little addresses to the crowds which had assembled at all the stopping-places. Once more he conducted a platform campaign which showed his remarkable energy. (Though he was over 70, he could still walk 30 miles in a day when on holiday.) Gladstone's main proposal was the extension of the franchise to the agricultural labourer, but his speeches consisted almost entirely of an attack on the government. He criticised Beaconsfield's extravagant expenditure, heavy deficits, "needless wars, unprofitable extensions, and unwise engagements." The Queen and many of his own supporters were scandalised at this submission of questions of high policy to direct democracy; for in those days leading statesmen rarely appeared on the platform. At any rate, Gladstone's activity impressed the country. The elections resulted in the return of 347 Liberals, 240 Conservatives, and 65 Home Rulers. "The

Midlothian campaign was more than the triumph of oratory, more even than the victory of personality; it was the recognition of a stupendous change coming over the face of the political waters: the shifting of the centre of political gravity from Parliament to the platform, from the House of Commons to the constituencies, from the classes to the masses."

Beaconsfield saw the futility of trying to face the new Parliament, and he resigned before it met (April 21st, 1880). Almost exactly a year later he died. Few English statesmen have been such an enigma to their own age, and so difficult for the historian to estimate. Entering Parliament with no influence and with many disadvantages, he had to fight for his own hand. His determination, his bravery, and his sarcasm made him in debate a formidable opponent, who neither asked nor gave quarter. Ignored by Peel, he seized his opportunity in 1846 and took his revenge, even at the cost of the break-up of his party. During the long years of exclusion from power which followed, he nursed his followers with infinite patience, never despairing of final victory. When at last power came to him, it is difficult to criticise his use of it. He is not remembered for great legislative achievements. He was no law-giver, but a prophet. His utterances were often vague and obscure, as the utterances of prophets are inclined to be; but they gave men a sense of the grandeur and dignity of our Empire. Though he did not live to see the harvest, his labours had done much to ensure his party twenty years of almost continuous power. When it was known that he was dead, no one felt his loss more than the Queen, who herself placed a wreath on his coffin.

On Beaconsfield's resignation in April 1880, the Queen sent for Lord Hartington, the leader of the Liberal party in the Commons. Hartington sounded Gladstone, who promised him general support, but refused to serve second to anyone. In fact, the Midlothian campaign had made Gladstone's resumption of the leadership inevitable, and he was soon bidden to form an

administration. His cabinet included Joseph Chamberlain, who, before entering Parliament, had made a great reputation in municipal administration, and was idolised in Birmingham to the day of his death. Chamberlain was a thorough Radical, and was regarded by many of his colleagues as a firebrand. The cabinet was really a coalition between Radicals, whose appetite for reform had only been whetted, and Whigs, whose sympathies were still essentially aristocratic. Even Gladstone's authority was not strong enough to prevent frequent discord between the two groups. In spite of its large majority, the history of Gladstone's second administration is one of failure and disappointment.

The first difficulty encountered by the government was Bradlaugh's case. Charles Bradlaugh, one of the members for Northampton, was an atheist, and could therefore not take the Parliamentary Oath, which ended with the words "So help me God." The difficulty might easily have been overcome had it not been for the action of four members of the Opposition. These men—Lord Randolph Churchill, Mr A. J. Balfour, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, and John Gorst—were impatient of the control of Sir Stafford Northcote, their nominal leader, and seized every opportunity of baiting Gladstone. Bradlaugh gave them their first opening. Debate after debate was held on his case, which was not decided until the next Parliament, when he was allowed to take his seat. The success of the "Fourth Party" in this guerrilla warfare reflected great discredit on the government, and wasted much of its time.

The next embarrassment of the cabinet was Ireland, which had not been appeased by Gladstone's legislation of 1869–1870. Irishmen regarded this legislation as having been extorted from England by the Fenian outrages, just as Catholic Emancipation had been won by the threat of civil war. They felt no gratitude in either case, but were rather encouraged to continue a policy of intimidation. In 1870 a meeting at the Bilton Hotel, Dublin, founded the "Home Government Association", which changed

its name in 1873 to the "Home Rule League". The demand for Home Rule must not be confused with that for Repeal. The Repealers had pointed to the failure of the English Parliament to govern Ireland, and had argued that an Irish Parliament could do no worse. The Home Rule agitation was part of the great national and democratic movement of the century. It rejected Gladstone's attempts to legislate *for* Ireland, and demanded legislation *by* Ireland. It held that it was better for Irishmen to govern themselves badly than for Englishmen to govern them well.

The first leader of the Home Rule party was Isaac Butt, an eminent barrister. He believed in Parliamentary methods, and annually brought in a Home Rule motion, which was always defeated by a heavy majority. His followers grew tired of this procedure, and in 1875 one of them began the policy of obstruction, by speaking for four hours on an amendment which had nothing to do with Ireland. That same night Parnell took his seat for County Meath.

Charles Stuart Parnell had few of the qualifications one would expect to find in an Irish leader. His father was an English landowner in Ireland, and a Protestant, while his mother was an American. He was no orator, and he had none of the passion of the Celt. Two qualifications soon made him the despotic ruler of his party: he was a born leader and tactician, and he bitterly hated everything English. The open contempt he displayed for the dignity of Parliament and for the feelings and prejudices of its members made him remarkably popular in Ireland. Even while Butt was still the nominal leader of the party, Parnell systematised obstruction. He was determined to prevent the English Parliament from governing England, so long as it insisted on trying to govern Ireland. The Irish members organised themselves for the purpose of wasting time. This was very hard to prevent; as the rules of the House were more lenient then than now. A very ingenuous new Member might have imagined that Parnell and his followers

were anxious that no new law should be passed, and no old law renewed, until they had convinced themselves that it deserved a place in the statute-book. They criticised every provision of every measure, and if no supporter of the government would prolong the debate by defending it, one of their own number would do so. Their zeal for their Parliamentary duties was remarkable: they were rarely absent; they never paired; and they were willing to keep the House sitting until 7 in the morning. All this imposed a severe strain on the supporters of the government, who had to work in relays like miners, and who were always liable to be called from their dinner to vote in a division.

Parnell did not rely on Parliamentary obstruction alone: he believed in agitation out of doors, and finally persuaded the Fenians in Ireland and America to work with him. In 1879 he helped to found the Land League. The objects of the other founders of the League were purely economic: they wished to reduce rents and establish security of tenure, and they passed a resolution that the funds of the League were not to be used for political ends. Parnell, however, wished to make it an instrument for getting rid of the English landlords, who were an obstacle to Home Rule. In that year Butt died, and in the Parliament of 1880 Parnell was the official leader of his party. The condition of Ireland demanded the serious attention of the government in 1881. The failure of the harvests of 1879 and 1880 had made it impossible for tenants to pay their rent, with the result that over 10,000 evictions took place in 1880. (The Land Act of 1870 gave no remedy against eviction if the tenant had not paid his rent.) In consequence, over 800 serious agrarian crimes were committed in the last three months of the year. In addition, the practice of "boycotting" now came into existence[1]. A landlord who evicted a tenant, or a farmer who took a holding from which the previous tenant had

[1] The term was derived from Captain Boycott, the agent of a Connemara landlord, who was one of the first to suffer from it.

been evicted, was treated as a moral leper, with whom no one dared hold any intercourse whatsoever.

In 1881 Gladstone brought in two measures, one dealing with the symptoms, the other with the causes of the unrest. A Coercion Bill, "which practically enabled the viceroy to lock up anybody he pleased, and to detain him as long as he pleased," was doggedly opposed by the Irish members, who maintained the debate for 22 sittings, and who had to be forcibly expelled before it was carried in a final sitting of 41 hours. A Land Bill was then introduced which embodied the recommendations of a recent commission and granted the "three F's"—fair rent, fixity of tenure, and free sale. A tenant who thought his rent excessive, and who was not in arrears, might appeal to a new Land Court, which would fix a fair rent, to hold good for 15 years. Many Irishmen were agreeably surprised at this concession to their theory of dual ownership. Parnell, however, held that it should apply to the 100,000 tenants who had been unable to pay their rent for the last two years. It may also be noticed that agricultural prices fell by one-third during the next 15 years; so that "fair" rents became unfair long before they could legally be altered.

Parnell's refusal to accept the bill as being wholly satisfactory meant that agrarian crime was still rife in Ireland. At last, in October 1881, the government arrested Parnell and many other leading Irishmen under the Coercion Act. On being arrested, Parnell warned his captors that he was leaving "Captain Moonlight" in charge. Captain Moonlight gave the authorities more trouble than Parnell had done. Crime increased to such an appalling extent that even Parnell became anxious. In April 1882 he informed the cabinet that if they would settle the question of arrears of rent, and release prisoners who were not suspected of actual crime, he would do his best to restore order. His offer was accepted, and he and his friends were released. The "Kilmainham Treaty", so called from the gaol in which Parnell was imprisoned, led to the resignation of the

Chief Secretary, W. E. Forster, who believed that coercion would ultimately succeed. His successor, Lord Frederick Cavendish, reached Dublin on May 6th. Late that afternoon he was walking across Phoenix Park with Burke, the permanent Under-Secretary, when they were assassinated. The fact that the murderers were ignorant of Lord Frederick's identity, and had merely intended wreaking their revenge on Burke, only intensified the horror inspired by their dastardly act. The last state of Ireland seemed worse than the first. There seemed no escape from the vicious circle: coercion giving rise to discontent, discontent to crime, and crime to coercion.

Gladstone first passed a Crimes Bill of unprecedented severity, and afterwards an Arrears of Rent Bill, which relieved tenants who paid less than £30 a year from their arrears, and gave the landlords partial compensation from the exchequer. Lord Spencer and G. O. Trevelyan used their exceptional powers with vigour, and restored at least outward calm.

In 1884 Gladstone succeeded in redeeming his promise to give the vote to the agricultural labourer. The county franchise was made identical with that in boroughs. This Reform Bill created more new electors than those of 1832 and 1867 put together. At the same time a redistribution bill was passed, by which single-member constituencies of approximately equal population were established, save in towns containing between 50,000 and 165,000 inhabitants, which were to return two members each. The importance of these measures is obvious.

The Irish difficulties of the government were mainly due to causes outside its control; its foreign difficulties were largely its own fault. The events which happened during this period in the Transvaal and in Egypt will be narrated later (pp. 211 and 271). Here it may be noticed that most Englishmen thought Gladstone guilty of culpable weakness in granting the Boers independence before avenging Majuba (Feb. 26th, 1881), and guilty of culpable negligence in not preventing the fall of Khartum (Jan. 26th, 1885). The Queen sent Gladstone a telegram *en clair*, blaming

him for not having saved the lives of Gordon and the garrison of Khartum by earlier action, and the government escaped censure in the Commons by only 14 votes (Feb. 28th, 1885). It was destined soon to be beaten on its Irish policy.

In the winter of 1884–5 the members of an Irish secret society had exploded charges of dynamite in the Tower of London, in the House of Commons, and on London Bridge. The Crimes Act passed after the Phoenix Park murders was due to expire in August 1885; but in May Gladstone announced his intention of renewing some of its provisions. The Conservatives saw their opportunity of turning him out. Largely owing to the influence of Lord Randolph Churchill, they determined to drop coercion, and they allowed Parnell to know it. In consequence the Irish members helped the Conservatives to defeat the government on the beer duties on June 8th, and Gladstone was glad of the excuse to resign. His second administration compares unfavourably with his first. A few useful measures had been passed[1]; but he had been unable to prevent most of the time of the House from being wasted. Problems had arisen in which his peculiar gifts had no scope, and to which he did not give sufficient attention. It was just as well for him that his opponents were given a spell of office before the general election.

Lord Salisbury was not anxious to take office, as the Conservatives were in a minority in the Commons, and he could not dissolve Parliament until November, when the new register would be ready. The Irish policy of the new government was outlined by Lord Carnarvon, the new Lord Lieutenant, who had brought about the federation of Canada, and attempted the federation of South Africa. Carnarvon pointed out that Ireland was always governed by exceptional powers, and urged that it ought not to be difficult to give her a constitution of the

[1] Elementary education was made compulsory; employers were made liable for accidents due to their foremen; farmers were given equal rights with their landlords to kill ground game.

colonial type. In a private conversation he gave Parnell the impression that the Conservatives would be willing to establish an Irish Parliament if they obtained a majority at the general election. The government also advanced £5,000,000 to Irish tenants to enable them to buy their farms. Bright had long ago insisted that the true solution of the land question was the establishment of peasant proprietors, and subsequent efforts followed these lines.

On August 14th Parliament was prorogued for the general election. In the interval Parnell told Irishmen in England to vote for Conservative candidates, from whom they had most to hope. He now abandoned his Parliamentary isolation for a policy of alliance with each party in turn, with the object of securing as much as possible from both. Gladstone was studiously vague on English and Irish affairs, as he wished to keep the two wings of his party together. Many of the Whigs strongly objected to the programme put forward by Chamberlain on his own responsibility, which included free education, payment of members, manhood suffrage, the abolition of plural voting, a graduated income-tax, and the disestablishment of the Church of England. Gladstone asked for a "party totally independent of the Irish vote," that the question might be settled by Salisbury or himself without Irish support, which would mean Irish pressure. When, however, the elections were over in December, it was found that the Liberals were exactly equal in number to the Conservatives and Home Rulers added together; so that Parnell held the balance. The huge majorities by which Parnell's followers were returned, now that the Irish peasants had the vote, convinced Gladstone that the demand for Home Rule was national, and he began to think out a scheme for an Irish Parliament. His plan became public property through the indiscretion of his son, and caused much heart-burning among his followers. Salisbury saw that he could do nothing unless he placed himself unreservedly in the hands of Parnell, a step he had not the slightest intention of taking.

The Irish members accordingly joined forces with Gladstone to carry an amendment to the Address on January 26th, 1886, and on the 28th Salisbury resigned. On February 1st Gladstone became Prime Minister for the third time, resolved on the great adventure.

CHAPTER VIII

ENGLAND AND IRELAND 1886–1914

We have now reached a point from which it becomes increasingly difficult to write the history of England. Many of the questions to be discussed in this chapter still await settlement and still excite feeling, many of the politicians are still alive, and many of the secrets are still unrevealed. Even if we were acquainted with all the evidence, and if we could examine it without passion or prejudice, we should still find it impossible to acquire historical perspective. The historian traces the growth of important movements from small beginnings; to foretell the growth when only the beginnings are visible is the function of the prophet. Henceforward the mass of detail becomes more formidable, and the task of selection more difficult.

When in February 1886 Gladstone was ordered to form an administration, he told those whom he invited to join it that he was anxious to discover if it were not possible to establish a legislative body in Dublin for purely Irish affairs. Of the recipients of this message five, including Hartington, Goschen, and John Bright, refused to take office under such conditions; two, Chamberlain and Trevelyan, were prejudiced against the idea, but came in to see how it would develop; and seven were anxious for such an inquiry. At the end of March Chamberlain and Trevelyan found that they could not agree with their colleagues, and resigned.

On April 8th Gladstone moved the first reading of the Home Rule Bill in a remarkably full House. He proposed to establish an Irish legislature consisting of two orders, deliberating together, but with the right of voting separately. This body was to have full power to deal with purely Irish affairs, such matters

as defence and foreign policy being reserved for the Parliament at Westminster, to which Ireland would send no representatives. The executive power was to be entrusted to the viceroy, assisted by a privy council, but advised by ministers responsible to the legislature.

This measure broke up the Liberal party. Many of Gladstone's followers were really Whigs, and had felt little sympathy with his reforming zeal. Lord Randolph Churchill had compared Hartington to a boa-constrictor, forced by his master to swallow one Radical measure after another. John Bright had long ago declared that Goschen was no true Liberal, and that one day he would hold office in a Conservative government. (Goschen had refused to take office in 1880, because he disapproved of the extension of the franchise in the counties.) To such men Home Rule was only the last straw: they had long groaned under the previous load. The seceders also included men like Bright and Chamberlain who were more Radical than Gladstone. To them, Home Rule was distasteful in itself, and they looked forward to a reconciliation when it had been decently buried. The assault on the bill was led by Hartington and Chamberlain; but John Bright did more than anyone else to ensure its rejection. There were many Liberals who found it hard to vote against their old chief, and who thought it would be enough to stay away. At first Bright was of this opinion; but he became convinced that it was his duty to vote against the bill. His attitude decided the waverers. Early in the morning of June 8th the second reading was lost by 30 votes, 93 Liberals voting with the majority.

Gladstone determined not to abandon the fight without appealing to the country. At the general election the Conservatives and the Liberal Unionists did not contest each other's seats, while there was civil war between the two sections of the Liberal party. The elections resulted in the return of 316 Conservatives, 78 Liberal Unionists, 191 Gladstonian Liberals, and 85 Parnellites. On July 20th Gladstone resigned office, without

waiting for the meeting of the new Parliament. Ten days later he had a final audience with the Queen, who received him very frigidly. She had informed him of her dislike of Home Rule at the beginning; she had censured him for his oratorical tours outside his own constituency; and she had not disguised her delight at the result of the general election.

Lord Salisbury now became Prime Minister for the second time. He had offered to serve under Hartington, as leader of the combined party; but Hartington thought that, as there was still a possibility of Liberal reunion, the administration ought to be purely Conservative. Lord Randolph Churchill was made Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the Commons. As Secretary for India in Salisbury's first cabinet he had shown ability, industry, and a sense of responsibility for which few had given him credit. His democratic views were regarded with misgivings by many of his party; but his power over the constituencies was inferior only to that of Gladstone and Chamberlain. On December 23rd the country was astounded to hear that he had resigned office. He was sincerely anxious for national economy, and had carried his opposition to the increased army and navy estimates to the extent of tendering his resignation, never dreaming that it would be accepted. But he had "forgotten Goschen". In his extremity, Salisbury appealed to Hartington, who, while refusing office himself, raised no objections to Goschen's becoming Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1887 a conference between representatives of the two Liberal groups began well, but ended in failure, and the split was never mended.

After the rejection of the Home Rule Bill two Irish members started the "Plan of Campaign", much against Parnell's wishes (October 1886). The Commission appointed to fix fair rents under the Act of 1881 had not made their decisions compulsory, with the result that landlords who were dissatisfied simply ignored them. To deal with such cases the "Plan of Campaign" introduced the system of collective bargaining which Trade Unions had made familiar. The tenants of any landlord were to offer

him what, in their opinion, was a fair rent. If he refused the offer, the money was to be used as a war fund. In December the government declared the movement illegal, and in March 1887 a Crimes Bill was introduced by the Prime Minister's nephew, Mr A. J. Balfour, as Secretary for Ireland. The fact that this bill was to be permanent made it certain that it would encounter considerable opposition. It was probably with a view to easing its passage that the *Times* published a series of articles on "Parnellism and Crime", which strove to connect the Irish members with Fenian and other outrages. On April 18th, the day of the division on the second reading of the bill, it printed the facsimile of a letter said to have been written by Parnell soon after the Phoenix Park murders, in which he said that Burke had got no more than he deserved. Even among members of Parliament there are many who believe everything they see in print, particularly in the *Times*. When that night Parnell denied having written the letter, which he called a "villainous and bare-faced forgery", many Conservatives laughed, and the bill passed its second reading by 101 votes. To deal with obstruction in committee the government, which had already introduced the "closure" in January, adopted the "guillotine". The House was now given a fixed period to discuss a government measure: if it chose to waste that time, the measure would pass automatically. The Crimes Bill became law on July 19th. At the same time a Land Act was passed, extending the Act of 1881 to leaseholders, and allowing the Land Court to revise, i.e. to reduce, rents. These two laws foreshadowed Mr Balfour's policy in Ireland. On the one hand he sympathised with economic distress, and did his utmost to relieve it. His efforts met with considerable success. The Light Railways Bill and the Congested Districts Commission did much to raise Irish agriculture out of the "Slough of Despond". On the other hand, he was determined to exact obedience to the law. In his struggles with the forces of disorder he showed a firmness, even a severity, of which few had thought him capable. In this

aspect of his policy also he was more successful than most Irish Secretaries.

With his usual contempt for English public opinion, Parnell had not attempted to obtain a verdict for libel against the *Times*. In 1888, however, one of his followers brought an action on his own account, and during the trial further letters stated to have been written by Parnell were read in court. On July 9th Parnell demanded a select committee of the House to enquire into their authenticity. His request was refused; but the government established an extraordinary commission of three judges to examine all the charges brought forward in the articles on "Parnellism and Crime". This, of course, went further than Parnell wanted; but resistance was useless. The Commission sat for 128 days, spread over a period of 14 months. It discovered that the letters had been obtained from one Pigott, a needy journalist who had written begging letters to most Irish M.P.s. Pigott had first offered them to Hartington's secretary, who had refused them, and had then sold them to the editor of the *Times*, who asked for no proof of their authenticity. After two days' cross-examination by Sir Charles Russell, Pigott broke down completely, and fled to Madrid, where he committed suicide to avoid arrest. The report of the Commission, which ran into 7,000 pages, was published on February 13th, 1890. On the point which had provoked the enquiry—whether Parnell had written the letters or not—it found him innocent. The first time the Irish leader entered the House after the publication of the report, all the Liberal members and many of the Conservatives rose to their feet and cheered him. With regard to the rest of their enquiry, the Commissioners found many things which most people knew already: that the majority of Irishmen wished to govern themselves, and that many of them were willing to use illegal means to achieve this end. Whether such a desire was justifiable, in the light of Irish history, or whether its realisation would prove beneficial, were political rather than judicial questions.

The signs of the times seemed not unfavourable to Gladstone.

After the rejection of the Home Rule Bill, Englishmen paid more attention to Ireland than before, to see how the alternative policy succeeded. They found that, even under a man like Mr Balfour, the story of coercion made sad reading. They realised that, after centuries of effort, English law in Ireland was not the same as English law in England. In a speech made during the 1885 election, Lord Salisbury had practically defended boycotting. Now that he was Prime Minister, he was allowing his nephew to arrest Irish members at the door of the House of Commons. Many Conservatives felt that Mr Balfour was doing his party considerable harm, and by-elections were going against the government. In October 1890, Gladstone went on another Midlothian campaign. "Then," to quote his biographer, "all at once a blinding sandstorm swept the ground. One of those events now occurred that with their stern irony so mock the statesman's foresight, and shatter political designs in their most prosperous hour." In November Parnell was cited as co-respondent in a divorce case, and offered no defence. The main strength of Liberalism lay among the Nonconformists, and the Nonconformist conscience was aroused. Gladstone informed Parnell that one or other must resign his leadership. Parnell refused to abdicate, and he was deposed by a majority of his party, who saw that Home Rule could not be carried without the Liberal alliance. Beaten at Westminster, Parnell embarked on a campaign in Ireland. His energy was greater than his vitality, and he wore himself to death at the early age of 45 (October 6th, 1891).

It is still early to attempt a final estimate of the work of this remarkable man. He succeeded in making himself ruler of Nationalist Ireland, and in inducing the most prominent English statesman to take up his cause. But, successful as his tactics had appeared, they told heavily against him when Home Rule became a question of practical politics. His systematic obstruction had been neutralised by stricter rules of procedure in the House. His failure to denounce crime, nay, his callous readi-

ness to use it as a political weapon with which to intimidate his opponents, had alienated English public opinion, without the support of which Home Rule could not be carried. His policy of balancing the two great parties had brought him into frequent collision with the Liberals, many of whom were afterwards reluctant to work with him. He left his own party divided, and the priests succeeded to his power. It may yet be, however, that future historians will regard him as the real founder of a successful movement.

The life of the Parliament elected in 1885 was now drawing to a close. The Conservative government could point to an excellent record of work done. They had laid down the two power standard in 1889, and had greatly strengthened the Navy. In spite of the extra expenditure, Goschen's finance had been so successful that he had a surplus in 1891, which he used to make elementary education free. The government had established County Councils, assisted technical education, passed a Small Holdings Act[1], and improved the Factory Laws. Salisbury had concluded agreements with France and Germany which removed causes of friction in Africa. The general election of July 1892, however, gave Gladstone a majority of 40, counting the Nationalists. On August 18th he became Prime Minister for the fourth and last time.

On February 13th, 1893, Gladstone introduced his second Home Rule Bill, which differed from the first in allowing Irish members to sit at Westminster, and in dividing the Irish legislature into two distinct chambers. By September 1 the bill had passed through all its stages in the lower House, after scenes of excitement and even violence. On September 8th the Lords rejected it by a majority of more than ten to one. They had correctly gauged the feeling of the country, which took the news very quietly. In the following March Gladstone resigned office. He was 85 years of age; his sight and hearing were steadily

[1] This Act was ineffective; since it did not give local authorities the right of compulsory purchase.

failing; and he longed for a period of repose at the end of a life that had been devoted to politics. He had fulfilled his promise to his Irish allies, and had made another attempt to carry Home Rule. It was obviously shelved for his life-time, and he could retire with honour. In 1896 the news of the Armenian atrocities induced him to make his last appearance in politics, and on May 19th, 1898 he died. After lying in state in Westminster Hall for two days he was buried in the Abbey, the Prince of Wales acting as one of the pall-bearers.

There can be no doubt that Gladstone was one of the greatest Parliamentary figures in our history. As an orator he had few equals. His command of language, his clearness of thought, and his wealth of illustration enabled him to present his case in the most convincing manner. In administration, his versatility and energy impressed all who came into contact with him. As a financier—and he devoted most of his time to finance—he showed a grasp of principles, a fertility of resource in handling details, and a zeal for economy.

Entering Parliament as an opponent of democracy, he became its strongest champion. He never, however, stooped to the arts of the demagogue. When addressing working men, he paid them the compliment of treating them as rational beings; but he never flattered them. When he became convinced that legislation should be determined by public opinion, he strove to form and mould that opinion, to be a leader, not a mouthpiece. His democracy was political, not economic: towards the end of his life he viewed with concern the spread of Socialistic opinions among his followers and his opponents.

In foreign policy he made many mistakes, due partly to his insularity of view; but no one could question the nobility and sincerity of his motives. "He will leave behind him," said Lord Salisbury, "the memory of a great Christian statesman." His religion permeated his whole life. He strove to apply the principles of Christianity to all the problems with which he had to deal. He believed that the moral code which should govern

the relations between individuals should also govern the relations between states. He held firmly to the conviction that right would triumph over might. He was the champion of the weak and the oppressed. It is easy to smile at the application of such lofty ideals to politics and diplomacy; but it is worth noticing that Gladstone's standpoint was the exact opposite of Bismarck's.

When Gladstone retired, the Queen sent for Lord Rosebery; though Gladstone himself would have preferred Lord Spencer, and the majority of the party would probably have chosen Sir William Harcourt. Rosebery's fondness for the Turf (his horse won the Derby of 1894) scandalised his Nonconformist supporters. He immediately declared that Home Rule must be postponed until England, as "the predominant partner", was convinced of its justice. Harcourt brought in a Radical budget, which granted abatement to the lower incomes paying income-tax, and which made the death duties on large estates heavier in proportion than those on small ones. (The duties ranged from 1 per cent. on £100 to 15 per cent. on £1,000,000.)

In 1895 the chief measures of the government were a local veto bill, by which the inhabitants of a district might prohibit the sale of intoxicants, and a Welsh disestablishment bill. The former was at once thrown out; the latter had reached the committee stage when the government were beaten in a small House on a minor point (June 21st, 1895). They felt that they were doing no good by remaining in office, and they were not sorry for an excuse to resign. Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister for the third time.

The general election of 1895 gave the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists a majority of 152 over Liberals and Nationalists, and even that majority did not represent the full strength of the government. The Liberal Unionists now accepted office under Salisbury; but it would be a mistake to regard his cabinet as a coalition. Ten years of co-operation had fused the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists into one party. The Liberal

Unionists had become Imperialists, and the Conservatives had become more democratic. The Opposition, on the other hand, was hopelessly divided. The Liberal party was torn by personal jealousies, and divided on the question of Imperialism. It was led in turn by Rosebery, Harcourt, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, none of whom was able to exercise control over the whole party. The Nationalists were also divided, those who had followed Parnell to the death still forming a distinct group under John Redmond.

Under these circumstances it was clear that, for the time being, Home Rule was not a question of practical politics, and there was a widespread feeling among Irishmen that they ought to turn their energies into non-political channels. In 1894 Sir Horace Plunkett founded the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, which he induced men of all sects and parties to join. By its establishment of butter and bacon factories and of village banks, the Society did much for the encouragement of dairy farming on the lines which had proved so successful in Holland, Belgium and Denmark. The new Irish Secretary, Gerald Balfour, was determined, as he said, "to kill Home Rule by kindness," and took the greatest interest in social and economic problems. A Land Purchase Bill of 1896 did some good; but emigration was still rapid, and the land question was still a source of trouble. Such was the extent to which Irishmen were learning to work together that in 1902 representatives of landlords and tenants met together and agreed on a policy of voluntary sale of land. In 1903 Parliament agreed to advance £5,000,000 a year for this purpose. The new peasant proprietor would pay off the cost of his farm in 68½ years, and the instalments would be less than his former rent. In 1898 the government had extended the principle of democratic local government to Ireland, and in the following year it had established the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, which did excellent work, often in co-operation with the Agricultural Organisation Society. The new district councils were not afraid to use their powers.

The way in which they tackled the rural housing problem, for instance, was an object lesson to England. By 1911 they had built 35,000 cottages for agricultural labourers, each with about an acre of land attached, from the produce of which the labourer could pay his rent of a shilling a week. While the outlook was bright, and Ireland seemed once more on the road to prosperity, it must be remembered that many Irishmen suspected a conspiracy to make them sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. The improved economic conditions only made them cling more passionately to their nationality. Hence arose the Sinn Fein movement. But here we must take our leave of Ireland.

Salisbury had once more taken the Foreign Office as his department. In the winter of 1895 the President of the U.S.A. tried to apply the Monroe doctrine to a dispute as to the boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela. For a time war seemed probable; but Salisbury's combination of tact and firmness led to the establishment of an international tribunal, which finally decided almost completely in favour of the English claims.

Next came the Armenian massacres, in which about 100,000 members of that unhappy race were killed. Russia, remembering the Crimean War and the Bulgarian atrocities, was unwilling to join in coercing the Porte, and the Kaiser openly supported the Sultan in order that Germany might receive the contract for the Bagdad Railway. Salisbury accordingly refused to take the independent action demanded by Gladstone, and was forced to content himself with protests. In 1896 the government undertook the re-conquest of the Sudan, which will be described later (p. 277).

The most energetic member of the cabinet was undoubtedly Joseph Chamberlain, who caused considerable surprise by going to the Colonial Office, then regarded as a minor post. He showed the country and his subordinates, however, that he had gone there for work, not rest. He was now the leading apostle of Imperialism. In his speeches he emphasised the need of closer

relations between the self-governing colonies and the mother country, and he urged that the Crown colonies should be regarded as undeveloped estates, to be opened up by British brains and British capital. He aimed at making the Colonial Office an effective instrument for these ends by collecting and disseminating information, and by interchanging opinions. The greater interest taken in colonial affairs was clearly shown in the Diamond Jubilee and the South African War.

In 1897 Queen Victoria celebrated her Diamond Jubilee. On June 22nd a thanksgiving service was held on the steps of St Paul's, so that the Queen, who was growing infirm, might not be forced to leave her carriage. The whole country made holiday; every village had its bonfire. The procession through London was magnificent in the extreme; but public attention was mainly attracted by a group of men whose frock coats and top hats assorted strangely with such a blaze of colour. These were the colonial premiers, whom Chamberlain had invited to the Jubilee, not simply to take part in the festivities, but to meet in conference. Questions of imperial trade and defence were discussed, and, though no definite policy was laid down, something was done to survey the ground.

The causes and events of the South African War will be found in the chapter on South Africa (pp. 215–221); here we may notice some of its effects on England. At the beginning of the third period of the war, the loss of hundreds of men in ambuscades and by disease aroused a feeling of irritation in England, and a section of the Liberal party demanded peace. In September 1900 Chamberlain persuaded Lord Salisbury to appeal to the country on the question of fighting the war to a finish, and the government were given a new lease of power.

The long strain proved too much for the aged Queen, who died at Osborne on January 2nd, 1901, and was buried by the side of her husband at Frogmore. To say that she had long regained her popularity would be an understatement: she was regarded with an esteem which was deeper than mere popularity, and

her loss was felt in the most distant parts of the Empire. Her successor, King Edward VII, played a more public, if not a more active, part in politics.

The Boer War cost the country 20,000 lives, and two hundred million pounds. It revealed the defects of our military system. In 1904 a commission of enquiry reported that hundreds of thousands of wrongly-sighted rifles and millions of rounds of defective ammunition had been issued, that the remount department had been swindled, and that contractors had been guilty of gross corruption. It had soon become obvious that the training of both officers and men was unsuitable for modern warfare. But it must not be forgotten that most of them were quick to learn from experience, that they adapted themselves to remarkably difficult conditions, and that the lessons learnt in the war were not forgotten in peace.

The Boer War helped to bring about an important change in our foreign policy. During the war our unpopularity on the Continent was such that only the Navy had prevented intervention. Now that our naval supremacy was threatened by Germany, it was doubtful if the policy of "splendid isolation" was safe. The Kaiser William II had ascended the throne in 1888, and, feeling confident of his ability to frame his own policy, had dismissed Bismarck in 1890. After the Franco-Prussian War, Bismarck had declared that Germany was satiated and desired no further conquests. To prevent France from thinking of revenge, he had aimed at isolating her, and had taken particular care to maintain an understanding with Russia. The new Kaiser was bent on territorial gains, and took no pains to preserve this understanding. In January 1896 he aroused much feeling in this country by sending a telegram to President Kruger, congratulating him on crushing the Jameson Raid without external aid. In 1897 he published a programme for the considerable increase of the German Navy, which at that time was insignificant, and in 1900 (and later in 1906 and 1908) the programme was extended. His active foreign policy and his bombastic

utterances might be discounted by his love of the lime-light; but he was master of a powerful army and was creating a powerful fleet.

Our relations with France had also been strained ever since our occupation of Egypt, and during the Boer War French opinion had been frankly hostile to us. But there was a material difference of tone between French and German comment. Frenchmen were not so much anti-British as pro-Boer. In accusing Great Britain of bullying a smaller country, and in denouncing the concentration camps (where the death-rate was appalling), they were standing for justice, as they saw it. The criticisms rankled; but they were unselfish and sincere. German comment on the other hand had revealed, not sympathy for a small country trying to preserve its nationality, but a deep-seated jealousy of Great Britain. There could be little doubt that, though England and France misunderstood each other, they cherished the same ideals, and King Edward, acting in harmony with his ministers, determined to bring them together. In 1903 he paid a public visit to Paris, which received him with enthusiasm, and the same year President Loubet visited England. In 1904 all grounds of dispute were removed by an agreement by which, among other points, England recognised French interests in Morocco, and France recognised the English occupation of Egypt. The understanding was not confined to diplomatists: the *entente cordiale* became a popular watchword on both sides of the Channel, and stood the strain of the Moroccan crisis of 1905–6, which was brought about by the Kaiser's personal action.

The Kaiser's neglect of Russia had left her free to make an alliance with France (1895). England was still afraid of Russian designs on India; but France worked hard to bring her friend and her ally together. Her task was made easier by the Russo-Japanese War. In 1907 a treaty was signed which defined the British and Russian spheres of influence in Persia, bound both powers not to interfere in Tibet, and gave Great Britain control

of the foreign policy of Afghanistan. In 1908 King Edward visited Revel, and in the following year the Tsar and representatives of the Duma visited England. Englishmen were surprised to learn how much the Russians knew about the British constitution, and how much they admired it.

By this time, then, Great Britain had made treaties with both France and Russia on non-European questions, and was on terms of general friendship with them; though she was bound to them by no treaty obligations in the event of a European war. The Kaiser was relying on the Triple Alliance with Italy and Austria. Italy, however, had made a purely defensive treaty, and that only because of her strained relations with France. Between 1896 and 1904 the causes of friction between France and Italy were removed. The friendship between Great Britain and Italy had never been broken. In reality, Italy had more sympathy with the Triple Entente than with her partners in the Triple Alliance. The Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902 freed England from the necessity of maintaining a powerful fleet in the Far East, and marked the advent of Japan as a first-class power.

To return to home politics. Immediately after the close of the Boer War, Lord Salisbury resigned and Mr Balfour became Prime Minister. In May 1903 Chamberlain proposed that the war tax of a shilling a quarter should be retained on foreign corn, but that colonial corn should be admitted duty free. He afterwards expanded his plan so as to include the protection of British manufactures by tariffs. His action began a controversy which has endured ever since. In September 1903 Chamberlain left the cabinet in order to devote himself entirely to the work of converting the country. At the same time the strong Free Traders in the cabinet resigned because they disagreed with Mr Balfour on the question.

By 1905 the Conservatives were hopelessly divided, some going the whole way with Chamberlain, others preferring Mr Balfour's middle position, and yet others remaining true to

absolute freedom of trade. Their large majority had made them slack in their attendance in Parliament, slack in administration, and slack in the constituencies. The report on the administration of the Boer War had done much to discredit them, and their introduction of Chinese labourers into the Transvaal gave their opponents a formidable electioneering weapon. In December 1905 Mr Balfour resigned, probably thinking that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman would be unable to form a strong cabinet. But the Education Bill of 1902 (see p. 153), and the Tariff Reform campaign had healed the dissensions in the Liberal party, and all its leading members joined the administration. In January 1906 Parliament was dissolved, and the general election resulted in the greatest turnover in English history. The Liberals gained 212 seats, and came back with a majority of 240, not counting the 83 Nationalists and the 51 Labour members.

Shortly before his death in April 1908 Campbell-Bannerman was succeeded as Prime Minister by Asquith. Despite their large majority in the Commons, the Liberals found their measures (especially those dealing with education and the drink trade) thwarted by the House of Lords, which in 1909 rejected Mr Lloyd George's Budget. Asquith dissolved Parliament and came back in January 1910 with a reduced majority, pledged to curtail the powers of the Lords. The conflict was rendered less bitter by the national grief for the death of King Edward VII in May and by the general desire to smooth the path of King George V. The Parliament Act of 1911 deprived the House of Lords of the power to reject "money bills", and enacted that if a bill (other than a money bill) had been passed by the House of Commons in three successive sessions and rejected by the House of Lords, it should become law on receiving the royal assent, provided that two years had elapsed from its first introduction. The same year saw the introduction of Mr Lloyd George's scheme of National Insurance and the adoption of the payment of Members of Parliament.

During the next three years Irish affairs produced a degree of tension which seemed likely to result in civil war. In 1912 the government introduced a Home Rule Bill which was hotly resisted by the opposition. It passed its third reading in January 1913, only to be thrown out by the Lords. In July it again passed the Commons, and again suffered the same fate. In September a Provisional Government was established in Ulster to resist the Dublin Parliament contemplated by the Bill. In March 1914 many of the army officers at the Curragh sent in their resignations under the impression that they were to be called upon to coerce Ulster, where nearly 100,000 armed volunteers were drilling. The Bill passed the Commons for the third time in May, but in July a conference held at Buckingham Palace between the opposing leaders failed to reach agreement.

Other Liberal bills had been rejected by the Lords, and the government was being violently attacked by the suffragists, who, after the defeat of the Women's Suffrage Bill in May 1912, had burnt down a London church and placed a bomb under the bishop's throne in St Paul's.

Serious as were the government's domestic troubles, the foreign outlook was still more grave. The Agadir crisis of July 1911 might well have produced war between Germany and France had it not been for the firm attitude of the British Cabinet. Though determined not to permit an unprovoked attack on France, it was anxious for conciliation: in February 1912 Haldane went on a mission to Germany with the object of stopping the competition in naval armaments by mutual agreement, and in March Mr Churchill, in introducing the naval estimates, threw out the suggestion of a "naval holiday". These overtures met with an unfavourable response. In October the first Balkan War broke out, which, though temporarily localised, was a main cause of the Great War. In the summer of 1914 trouble blazed up afresh in the Balkans, and this time the conflagration involved Great Britain.

CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (A)

The purpose of this chapter and the next is to outline the social and economic changes which took place during the second half of the 19th century. It is important to realise that the Industrial Revolution was still in progress, affecting more deeply the industries which it had already penetrated, and making its way into others. The substitution of machinery for hand labour became so common that it is impossible to trace every step here. New processes, such as the Bessemer process for making steel, were discovered. Communication was made still easier by means of submarine cables, the steam turbine, and wireless telegraphy. Electricity and the internal combustion engine not only made travelling by road quicker, but made possible the development of submarines and aeroplanes. The application of machinery to tool-making led to the construction of more powerful engines for land and sea, and ushered in the age of spare parts. The movement has not attained its zenith even yet: there are still villages in Wales where the rattle of the hand-loom is heard in cottages; but such cases are growing rarer. In a modern tobacco factory a machine is shown which separates broken cigarettes from perfect ones, strips them of their paper, and collects the tobacco to be used again. In another factory is seen an automatic boot-maker, which laces up the finished boot, ties a knot, and cuts the string. In a third, may be seen a power-loom which weaves the most intricate pattern, picking up the shuttles containing the different colours with unerring accuracy, and ringing a bell and stopping when the thread breaks or is used up.

During this period the Industrial Revolution became a

world-movement. For a generation after the repeal of the Corn Laws the hopes of the Manchester School were realised: England was the workshop of the world, exporting manufactures and importing raw materials and food-stuffs. Even agriculture enjoyed a season of unexampled prosperity. But the spread of railways and the improvement of steamships exposed the British farmer to foreign competition. In 1865 there were only 3,000 miles of railway in existence west of the Mississippi; by 1883 there were 50,000. The freight rate from New York to Liverpool fell from 5*s.* 6*d.* a quarter in 1871 to 10*d.* in 1901. Russia, the Argentine, Canada and India were also building railways and exporting cereals to Great Britain. In 1880 the first cargo of frozen meat was imported from Australia, the refrigerating machinery being worked by the ship's engines.

Foreign competition was felt next in manufactures. The British manufacturer had had a long start, but others were now entering the race. The natural resources of the United States are enormous: at the present time they produce more coal, iron, copper, cotton, petroleum, tobacco, wheat and fish than any other country in the world. It was not to be expected that they would continue to send their raw materials to England instead of making them up themselves. The development of American manufactures may be illustrated by the exports of machinery and agricultural implements, which were worth $7,940 in 1861, and $116,992,000 in 1907. The commercial rivalry and methods of Germany threatened not only the trade, but the security, of Great Britain.

It is important to note that other foreign countries have natural advantages which are certain to be developed, and that some of them have already begun the process. Take, for example, the ship-building and repairing yard established by Antonio Lage on an island in the bay of Rio de Janeiro. There are to be seen not only perfectly equipped machine shops, and dry docks hewn out of the solid rock, but model farms, bakeries and abattoirs, which supply food for the

artisans and for Lage's steamers, which practically monopolise the coasting trade of Brazil. The whole establishment compares favourably with the best ship-repairing yards in Great Britain. At present the ship-building is on a small scale; but Lage is prepared to build large warships complete with guns, if the Brazilian government will protect him from foreign competition at the start. (Even Adam Smith was not opposed to the protection of new industries, until they had taken firm root.) Factories are springing up in Japan and India, and the exploitation of the vast resources of China has begun. Earlier in this book it has been said that the Industrial Revolution, while adding immensely to the wealth of England, made her prosperity unstable, as circumstances might render her customers unable to buy her goods. It is obvious that her prosperity has been rendered even more precarious by the extension of the Industrial Revolution, which has converted some of her former customers into rivals, and has given other customers a choice between her and foreign manufacturers. England now depends almost entirely on trade, for defence as well as for livelihood. The burden of modern armaments requires a large and elastic revenue, and the manufacture of modern weapons demands the best engineering plant and the best mechanical skill. It would be outside the purpose of this book to discuss the methods which British manufacturers should adopt to retain their supremacy, which up to the present is only challenged, not lost.

The Industrial Revolution has not only spread throughout the civilised world; it has led to the parcelling up of the rest of the inhabited globe by civilised countries, owing to the necessity of finding fresh markets and fresh sources of raw materials. This opening up of the world has been made not only necessary but possible by the Industrial Revolution. Many half-civilised countries could not have been developed by European traders without railways, tinned foods, and modern weapons. Another important factor has been the great advance

in tropical hygiene. When in 1882 de Lesseps attempted to construct a canal across the Isthmus of Panama, he found yellow fever a more formidable obstacle than engineering difficulties. Rows and rows of tomb-stones still mark the graves of his engineers—the labourers died in such numbers that they could not be given separate graves. The progress of medical science has made the tropics less unhealthy for white men than our large towns were at the beginning of the 19th century.

Civilisation has thus become international, not only on its material, but on its intellectual and political side. Nigerian chiefs own and drive motor-cars; the Boy Scout movement has spread to Siam; Parliaments have been established in China and Japan; India and Egypt are beginning to demand Home Rule. These world movements may properly be mentioned in a work on English history, since England made this inter-communication possible, and since England and France have had most influence as constitutional models.

To return to England. The most important fact in English political history in the second half of the century was the transference of power to the working class. Without discussing the question how far our central government has really been democratised, it may be said that the democratic frame-work had been practically finished by the end of the century—unless one holds that women's suffrage was essential to its completion. In the middle of the century the upper classes still ruled England. The middle class had been admitted to the franchise and to Parliament, but the cabinet was still essentially aristocratic. By the end of the century working men had gained seats in Parliament, and they were soon to enter the cabinet.

The second half of the century witnessed the removal of many religious and social disabilities. In 1858 Jews were allowed to sit in Parliament. In 1868 compulsory Church rates were abolished. In 1886 Bradlaugh was permitted to take the Parliamentary Oath, and in 1888 he secured the passage of an

affirmation act, which enabled Freethinkers to enter Parliament without going through a ceremony which had no meaning for them. In 1880 Nonconformists were allowed to bury their dead in parish grave-yards with any rites they chose. There has been a steady tendency to place members of all religions, or of no religion, on an equality before the law.

In the legal reforms of this period, the same principle of equality may be seen at work. Up to 1857 a divorce could be granted by the ecclesiastical courts for adultery or persistent cruelty; but the plaintiff was not allowed to marry again. A rich man who did not mind two more public discussions of his private affairs might secure the passage of a private Act of Parliament, allowing him to re-marry; a poor man had no legal remedy. An act of 1857 transferred divorce and probate cases from the ecclesiastical courts to a civil court created for that purpose. In the sixties imprisonment for debt, flogging in the Army in time of peace, and public executions were abolished. In the seventies order was evolved out of the chaos of the judicial system by the establishment of the High Court of Justice, sitting in three divisions, and the Court of Appeal. Much has been done to make justice cheaper and quicker[1]. Crime of all kinds has decreased to a considerable extent. There can be no doubt that this decrease has been due, not only to the much greater risk of detection, but to improvements in the prison system. The law no longer regards imprisonment as the only punishment for small offences. Where a sentence of imprisonment is passed with the option of a fine, reasonable time is allowed for the payment of the fine. First offenders are no longer sent to prison as a matter of course, but may have their sentences deferred during good behaviour. It is found that only about 1 in 12 commits a second offence. Convicts who have previously held a good record are carefully kept

[1] At the beginning of the century over £3,000 was charged in two years for the copying of documents relating to one suit, and an unopposed case lasted 12 years.

apart from habitual criminals, with the result that only 1 per cent. of them return to prison. Long-sentence men are taught a trade and are employed upon useful work, a stimulus to industry and good conduct being the fact that they can earn certain privileges and a remission of a quarter of their sentence. In a word, prisons no longer turn men who have yielded to sudden temptation into hardened criminals, but aim at reforming them.

The spread of democracy has been even more noticeable in local than in central government. It will be remembered that the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 entrusted the government of large towns to corporations elected by all the rate-payers. In 1888 the principle was extended to the counties. All towns with a population of 50,000 were made county boroughs. The administration of the rest of each county was taken from the justices in their quarter sessions and given to County Councils, consisting partly of county councillors elected for three years by the rate-payers, and partly of co-opted aldermen. The administration of London had previously been divided between the corporations of London and Westminster (whose authority was limited to the city boundaries), the Metropolitan Board of Works, and the parish vestries, which were oligarchic and often corrupt. London was now given a County Council, to which many distinguished men were elected. In 1894 elective district and parish councils were established.

Each district throughout the country was thus enabled to deal with its local problems. The result was an enormous increase of public enterprise, the commonest forms being the provision of water, gas, electricity, and tramway services. (In 1915, there were nearly 1,200 public water-works, and over one-third of the gas-works of the country were owned by municipalities. By 1910 nearly £600,000,000 of stock had been issued for municipal enterprises.) Municipal parks, museums, and picture-galleries are common. Torquay has its municipal restaurant, concert-hall, and orchestra; Doncaster has its

municipal race-course; Glasgow sorts its rubbish, to dispose of which it uses more than 700 of its own railway waggons.

In theory these local bodies enjoy almost complete independence, and may levy rates for any purpose. In practice their powers are limited in two ways, from above and from below. Most government departments have the right of making "grants in aid" from the Treasury, which supplement the local rates. For instance, in March 1913 the Home Office withheld a police grant of £28,000 from the Glamorgan County Council, because it considered the police station accommodation inadequate. Thus a locality which is content with inefficient administration may find its rates as high as those of a locality which manages its affairs well, and which has part of the expense borne by the country at large.

General control is exercised by the Local Government Board, which ratifies by-laws, gives or withholds its consent to loans, and appoints an auditor to examine the accounts of County Councils. The auditor has the power to call for any account books, to summon any person before him as a witness, and to disallow any payment, an appeal lying to the Local Government Board (or, in questions of law, to the High Court). Borough accounts, on the other hand, are audited locally, two of the auditors being elected by the burgesses, and a third appointed by the mayor. These auditors have no right of disallowance or surcharge.

Besides its financial oversight, the Local Government Board also controls sanitary administration, partly by general orders, e.g. relating to the appointment of medical officers of health, partly by ordering particular bodies to take certain steps, e.g. the provision of mortuaries.

The other check is from below. The meetings of these local bodies are public, and their policy is likely to be criticised at election time. In spite of this publicity, instances of corruption and inefficiency are not infrequent. In such cases, the rate-payers are to be blamed for not electing better men.

The remedy is in their own hands: they get the government they deserve.

One of the most important functions of County Councils is the administration of public education. In no department of life has the spirit of reform produced more striking changes than in education. At the beginning of the 19th century English education suffered from two defects: its quality was poor, and it was restricted to members of particular denominations.

The endowed schools, which had been founded for the education of poor children, had long ago been monopolised by the well-to-do. At the end of the 18th century attempts were made to remedy the deficiency of popular education by the establishment of charity schools. The motive was religious, and was a result of the great evangelical movement of the period. Two societies were founded, the National School Society by Churchmen, and the British and Foreign Schools Society by Nonconformists, both of which depended entirely upon private subscriptions. Their schools were organised on the monitorial system. All that was required to begin a school was a large room, such as a disused factory, and a schoolmaster. The schoolmaster would admit his most intelligent pupils a short time before the rest, and would teach them the day's lesson. Each of these monitors would then teach a class what he had just learnt. The schoolmaster's teaching work was over for the day, and he simply kept order while the monitors disgorged their hastily acquired information. Such a method was extremely cheap, and appealed to donors who liked to get their money's worth. It is clear, however, that the quality of the instruction must have been unsatisfactory. Apart from the fact that most of the teaching was done by children who were only a step beyond their class, the schoolmasters themselves frequently had no real qualifications, and only took to such work because they were incapable of any other. Many a soldier who had lost an arm or a leg in the wars eked out his pension by keeping school, either for a society, or on his own account. Even of

such education the supply was scanty. In 1818 only 600,000 children, out of more than two millions, went to school.

When the period of reaction after Waterloo was over, reform was demanded in education, as well as in other spheres. In 1833 Parliament made a beginning by granting £20,000 for the building of new schools, on condition that the societies paid half the expense. This was encouraging, but it was not enough. The schools had no real connection, and no common standard of work. A description of one of these schools in the late thirties has been given the author by a friend who attended it in his childhood. This particular school was held in a low room above the blacksmith's forge of a village in mid-Wales. If the schoolmaster saw a friend enter the village inn, which was commanded by the solitary window of the school, he would join him, and leave the children to their own devices. When the blacksmith was engaged on a big piece of work, such as shrinking an iron rim on to a cart-wheel, the smoke found its way into the schoolroom, and made a short holiday necessary. The schoolmaster was paid £20 a year, to which he added his salary as parish clerk, and an occasional fee for writing letters for the illiterate villagers.

In 1839 the administration of the Parliamentary grant was taken from the Treasury, and handed over to a special committee of the Privy Council, which insisted on the inspection of schools receiving state aid. In the following years monitors were replaced by pupil teachers, the inspection was improved, and the vote steadily increased. By 1860 the annual grant amounted to £842,000. It was notorious, however, that the quality of the work was unsatisfactory, and in 1861 the system of "payment by results" was instituted. Only one-third of the grant was to be given for attendance, the remainder depending on individual examinations in the "three R's". This system was expected to produce either efficiency or cheapness; but its results were unfortunate. The teachers were forced to grind away at too narrow a curriculum, and the children suffered the evils of

cramming. Half the children of the country, moreover, never attended school, and of those who did, half went to schools which received no grant, and which were therefore not inspected. England was far behind most civilised countries in this respect. The victory of Prussia over Austria in 1866 seemed the triumph of a nation which believed in popular education over one which did not. The Reform Act of 1867 gave the artisan the power of making and unmaking governments. "We must induce our masters to learn their letters," said a well-known politician.

Gladstone's first cabinet grappled with the problem. In 1870 W. E. Forster, Vice-President of the Council, brought in an important Education Bill. The question was difficult to handle because of the quarrel of the sects. The Nonconformists wanted education to be secular, compulsory, and free; Churchmen, remembering the splendid part played by the Church in education, insisted on retaining religious instruction. Forster gave way to neither side: his sole object was to give the country plenty of good schools. Where schools had not already been established by voluntary effort, or where the accommodation was insufficient, School Boards, on which women might sit, were to be elected by the rate-payers, and were to build schools out of the rates. These Boards had the option of making attendance compulsory, and of introducing religious teaching of an unsectarian kind. In both kinds of schools, if religious instruction were given, it must be at the beginning or end of the day's work; so that parents who objected to it might remove their children. Denominational schools were to receive no assistance from the rates; but their Parliamentary grant was doubled. All schools were to be visited by Government inspectors and were to use the prescribed Code. They were empowered to collect not more than 9*d.* a week from each child.

This system met with much opposition, and alienated many of the Government's Nonconformist supporters; but it achieved its object. Both the quality and the quantity of elementary education were improved. In 1880 children between 5 and 12

years of age were compelled to attend school; in 1890 the practice of payment by results, which had been gradually diminished, was altogether given up; and in 1891 elementary education was made free. Between 1870 and 1900 the average attendance increased from 1,250,000 to 4,666,000, the cost per child was doubled, and the grant was raised from £894,000 to £10,851,000.

In 1902 Mr Balfour's government abolished the School Boards, and handed over their duties to the local councils (County, Borough, and Urban District), which discharged them through education committees, on which co-opted members sat. Voluntary schools were to be assisted out of the rates, on condition that one-third of their managers were appointed by the local authority. This provision was warmly opposed by Nonconformists, who carried on a "passive resistance" campaign; but it still remains on the statute-book. It may be noted that education committees have recently been empowered to provide free medical and dental attendance, free spectacles, and free meals, in cases where the parents are unable to pay. This sketch of popular education would not be complete without reference to other agencies which have supplemented state action, such as evening continuation classes, extension lectures, Polytechnics, free libraries, workmen's clubs, and cheap editions of English classics.

At the beginning of the period secondary schools suffered from the same defects as elementary schools: the education they provided was insufficient in quantity and unsatisfactory in quality. The endowments were often diverted from their proper purpose, and only the classics and a little mathematics were taught, to the exclusion of science, history, and modern languages. A series of acts passed in the sixties reformed the constitution of the "public schools", and gave the Charity Commissioners supervision over their endowments. In the second half of the century their curriculum was widened, mainly through the action of schoolmasters themselves. In 1889–91

County Councils were empowered to establish secondary schools, supported partly by the fees of the pupils, partly by the rates, and partly by the "whiskey money" (the surplus yielded by the increased excise on whiskey). The schools thus established have acted as a stepping-stone from the public elementary schools to the universities.

The story of university reform is of a similar nature. At Oxford, matriculants had to declare their belief in the Thirty-nine Articles; at Cambridge, Dissenters were allowed to reside and to sit for examinations, but only members of the Church of England could take their degree. At both universities Fellows were not allowed to marry, and were usually required to be in orders. At Cambridge until 1824 the only examination for an honours degree was the Mathematical Tripos. In that year the Classical Tripos was founded; but only candidates who had already taken the Mathematical Tripos were allowed to sit for it. In 1850 this restriction was removed, and in 1851 Triposes were instituted in Natural Science and Moral Philosophy, which included Law and History. Outside the universities themselves it was generally felt that they might do more for the nation. It would be absurd to deny that much good work was done; but it was the exception rather than the rule. Discipline was lax, examinations were rare, and few men took a degree. Between 1852 and 1882 Parliament passed acts which reformed the constitution of both universities, removed all religious tests for prizes, degrees, and offices, abolished celibate and clerical fellowships, and limited the tenure of ordinary fellowships to seven years. It was in this period that Oxford and Cambridge began to influence secondary education by the establishment of Local Examinations, and popular education by Extension Lectures. In the second half of the century many provincial universities and university colleges were founded.

The reform of the Home Civil Service may conveniently be sketched here. Until 1855 all the higher posts in government offices were disposed of by the political head of the department,

the lower clerks being appointed by the Patronage Section of the Treasury. In order to check the open corruption which prevailed under this system, the Civil Service Commission was established in 1855 to test the qualifications of the nominees. After 1860 three persons were to be nominated for each vacancy, and were to compete for the post. Finally, in 1870 all departments in the Civil Service, with the exception of the Foreign Office, were thrown open to competition, with the result that they were able to draw on some of the most brilliant men from the universities.

A word may be added about the education of women. The girls' schools of the first half of the century developed neither the minds nor the bodies of their pupils. They taught nothing but polite accomplishments and a mass of disconnected facts dignified by the name of general knowledge. Games were considered unladylike, and instruments of torture were used for moulding the figure. In 1854 a new era began with the foundation of Cheltenham Ladies' College, which became the model for other girls' schools. Girls educated at such schools were able to profit by a university education. In 1867 women were admitted to the examinations of London University; in 1872 Girton was founded; and in 1875 Newnham. Oxford and Cambridge, while admitting women to their lectures and examinations, have so far refused them degrees; but the younger universities have given them the same status as men.

This survey has shown that education in England has been made infinitely more efficient during our period. The machinery already existing has been improved, not without external pressure, and it has been supplemented by the state. There are still educational problems which demand solution. In all its stages, education should have two aims: it should fit the pupil for his work in after life, and it should give him broad interests and worthy motives. The first aim should not be allowed to over-shadow the second. It is essential that England should have good doctors and good mechanics; but it is still

more essential that she should have good men. This is as important in the lower as in the higher grades. Technical instruction alone will not enable the artisan to spend his leisure profitably. He must be given counter-attractions to the "cinema" and the gin-palace.

CHAPTER X

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS (B)

It has been seen that in the first half of the century Parliament was forced to abandon the principle of *laissez faire* in industry and that the insanitary conditions of the factory towns led to the establishment of local Boards of Health. In 1875 the Public Health Act handed over the duties of these Boards to the municipalities, which were given an admirable sanitary code. The campaign for public health was powerfully aided by Tyndall's theory that diseases were caused and spread by germs (1870). In 1889 local authorities were empowered to make the notification of infectious diseases compulsory. In 1890 a Housing Act gave them the right to purchase slums at their proper value, to pull down the insanitary buildings, and to erect new dwellings on the site. Laws passed at different times enable them to deal with nuisances of all sorts, such as insanitary and overcrowded houses, the discharge by factories of injurious gases or excessive quantities of smoke, and the sale of tainted or adulterated food. If they find it necessary, they may build hospitals, mortuaries, and cemeteries. Some municipalities have used their powers with zeal and success; others have been over-cautious from a fear of increasing the rates. Unfortunately the Act of 1875 did not establish a strong central Board of Public Health, but added these new functions to the Poor Law Board, which was re-named the Local Government Board. This Board has never attempted to obtain the right of making grants in aid, which would enable it to force backward authorities to discharge their duties efficiently. In spite of this defect, the results achieved have been remarkable. Serious epidemic diseases, which used to sweep the country from end

to end, are now nipped in the bud by the policy of notification and isolation. The national death-rate has fallen from 25 per 1,000 in 1847 to less than 15 per 1,000 in 1910.

In the second half of the century Parliament extended the principles of the Factory Acts to most trades and industries. The sailor is no longer forced to go to sea in a crazy, heavily insured ship, or sent to prison for breach of contract. Employers must compensate their workmen for accidents which arise in the course of their employment, even if the accidents occur through the negligence of the workmen, not of the management. Practically the whole field of labour has been covered by legislation which insists on sanitary conditions and reasonable hours of work.

While the state was thus endeavouring to provide healthy surroundings for the working class, the workmen themselves were combining to secure higher wages. The problem of the distribution of wealth became acute after the Industrial Revolution. Under the medieval system the worker became first an apprentice, then a journeyman working for wages, and finally a master craftsman. When every workman had a reasonable hope of setting up in business on his own account, and when every master had served as a workman, the interests of capital and labour were not felt to be distinct.

Capital, in fact, hardly existed in its modern sense. But when machinery came in, there was a clear distinction between the employer and his employees. The division of labour gave each factory hand only one process of manufacture, and necessitated an organiser to co-ordinate the several processes. In most cases it was this organiser who provided the capital for the building of the factory and the purchase of the machinery. Under these conditions the vast majority of workmen became permanent wage-earners, and the interests of employers and men became distinct, if not conflicting. The question was, How were the profits to be divided between them? For a considerable time the employers were able to answer this

question as they chose. The men were forced to take the wages offered them, or starve. The shrewdest of them saw that their only hope of being able to bargain with their masters lay in organisation. Until 1825 all attempts at forming Trade Unions had to be made secretly, for fear of the Combination Laws. In that year a limited right of combination was allowed; but judges were still apt to regard an agreement to strike for higher wages as a conspiracy, and the law, while giving Trade Union funds no protection against dishonest officials, awarded damages out of them for illegal acts committed by Trade Union agents. By the Law of Master and Servant, if an employer broke his contract he could only be sued for damages in a civil suit; while a workman who broke his contract committed a crime, for which he might be sent to prison. In such a case the workman could not give evidence on his own behalf. This law was not a dead letter: in 1863 it was invoked by employers in more than 10,000 cases. In spite of these disabilities, the funds and membership of the Unions steadily grew larger, particularly after the failure of the Chartist movement. Their main objects were to secure the payment of a standard wage (for either time- or piece-work), to insist that all workers in trades which had a Union should belong to it, to improve the conditions of work, and to ensure steady employment. The first of these aims tended to the limitation of output in time-work, by preventing the best workman from doing more work than the worst, and the second interfered with the liberty of men who did not wish to belong to a Union. The defenders of Trade Unions upheld the first aim by arguing that a good workman who belonged to a Union could earn as much without fully exerting himself as he could by doing his utmost if he had to make his own terms with his employer. They defended the second by saying that men who paid no contributions to a Union should not share in the benefits won by that Union, and by pointing out that the same objection applied to the Bar or to the Stock Exchange.

In the later sixties the whole question of Trade Unionism attracted much attention. In 1867 a Commission found that in some large towns Trade Unions were guilty of intimidation. In Sheffield men who offended the Union were killed or injured, or their houses were blown up at the instigation of Trade Union officials, who paid for these outrages out of the Trade Union funds. On the whole, however, the Commissioners found that Trade Unionists were law-abiding in their methods.

In 1875 the Law of Master and Servant, which had been modified in 1867, was replaced by the Law of Employers and Workmen[1], which placed both parties on a perfectly equal footing in cases of breach of contract. An Act of 1869 extended to the funds of Trade Unions the protection already given to the funds of Friendly Societies. In 1871 the principle was laid down that nothing which was legal when done in a trade dispute by an individual became a criminal conspiracy when done by a number of individuals (as the judges had held). The Act of 1875 gave workmen full powers of combination, even for the purpose of organising strikes, and allowed them to deal with "blacklegs" by peaceful picketing. If any acts of violence were committed, they could be dealt with by the ordinary criminal law; but the Act was understood to provide that damages for such acts could not be recovered from Trade Union funds[2]. It should be noticed that this legislation followed the extension of the franchise to artisans.

In their struggle for higher wages the Trade Unions have had frequent resort to strikes. The strike is an expensive way of settling a dispute, and it is by no means certain to end in favour of the men; but it is their only weapon, and its use

[1] Note the change of terms.

[2] In 1901 the House of Lords, sitting in its judicial capacity, awarded heavy damages against the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants for encouraging the men employed on the Taff Vale Railway to break their contracts and come out on strike. The Liberal government of 1906 amended the law so as to make such a decision impossible in the future.

cannot be condemned without a knowledge of the rights of the case. In 1889, for example, 10,000 dock labourers employed in London demanded that they should be engaged for not less than 4 hours at a stretch, at not less than 6*d.* an hour. When their demands were refused, they came out on strike, and were helped by the stevedores, who struck in sympathy. They were well organised by John Burns and Ben Tillett, and their cause aroused much sympathy: the subscriptions on their behalf amounted to £46,000, every penny of which was accounted for. This conflict illustrated an important tendency which began in the eighties. The older Unions were composed of skilled operatives, such as engineers, who could afford to subscribe a shilling a week to the common fund. Unions were now formed by unskilled labourers, whose payments were not large enough to provide benefits, e.g. during sickness, and had to be reserved for strike purposes. It was at about the same time that Trade Unionists first began to lean towards Socialism.

Though it is difficult to sketch the rise of Socialism in half a dozen pages, the attempt must be made. Without dwelling on the ideas of such men as Robert Owen, Charles Kingsley, and John Stuart Mill, we may accept Mr Sidney Webb's statement that in England the effective socialist movement dates only from 1881. In those days Henry George was using Ricardo's theory of rent as an argument in favour of land nationalisation. Such a proposal, however, had little interest for the artisan, who was concerned, not with the landlord, but with the capitalist. Henry George's lectures and writings helped to attract the attention of working men to the doctrines of Karl Marx, whose *Communist Manifesto* had been published in 1848. Marx declared that there were only two factors in the production of wealth: land, which included all the aid man received from Nature, and labour, by which he meant manual labour alone. He therefore maintained that the value of an article depended on the amount of labour which had been expended on it. Since capital, according to

this analysis, was not essential, the profits received by capitalists were unjustly acquired, and it was the duty of the state to take over the means of production in all industries.

This statement of the case was naturally welcome to men who were dissatisfied with their share of the profits of industry. It was open, however, to a serious criticism. In practice, the value of an article does not depend simply upon the manual labour needed to make it. The value of this book, for example, depends partly, but not mainly, upon the number of hours the compositors and book-binders have taken to print and bind it. They may have spent precisely the same time over another book which sells ten times as well as this. The fact is that the compositor simply carries out the instructions of the author, who is almost entirely responsible for the quality of the work. Every author, moreover, has to find a publisher for his book. The success of the publisher will depend on his skill in gauging the public taste: if, from the books submitted to him, he chooses one which does not appeal to the public, he may be left with hundreds of copies on his hands, however well the printers have done their work. If he makes too many such mistakes he will lose his capital, for he has to pay his employees whether the books they print sell or not.

It is evident, therefore, that managing or directing ability is needed at the head of a business enterprise. Under competitive conditions, men with such ability come to the front automatically. They seem to "turn everything they touch into gold," which, used as capital, enables them to conduct their operations on a larger scale. If men who do not possess such ability attempt to manage businesses, they gradually lose their capital, and are no longer able to control the labour of others. The whole of history emphasizes the importance of leaders and organisers. Pitt, Clive, Wolfe, Anson and Hawke gave us the victory in the Seven Years' War; North, Sandwich, and Germain lost us our American colonies. There are Napoleons of trade and industry.

The importance of inventive ability is still more obvious. It has been calculated that the steam engine has dispensed with the labour of a thousand million men. James Watt's brains have performed more manual work than a nation of Samsons could have accomplished. A factory hand can look after three or four power-looms, which weave more cloth than a dozen hand-weavers. Yet far more manual skill is required to work a hand-loom than to look after a power-loom. It is the inventor, not the factory hand, who is doing the work of the eleven extra men.

In the nineties thoughtful Socialists admitted that ability was an essential factor in modern production; but they still aimed at the nationalisation of industry, because they refused to believe that competition was the only means of putting men who possessed such ability into responsible positions. They took the question out of the realm of academic discussion, and used arguments drawn from experience. They instanced the rapid development of the co-operative movement. They pointed to the enormous growth of the joint-stock principle, by which the owners had no real knowledge of the enterprise and took no active part in its management, becoming, in fact, "absentee employers". If the share-holders of a railway company could secure men of ability to act as managers and engineers, the state could do the same. They condemned the formation of trusts, rings, and combines, by which the consumer experienced the disadvantages of the competitive system without its benefits. If trade and industry could be conducted on such a scale for the profit of individuals, they argued, they could be conducted on a national scale for the benefit of the community[1].

A still stronger argument was the extent to which the state had already gone into business. Examples have already been

[1] It may be noted that one of the advantages of state trading is that it prevents overlapping. In England, for example, there are at present 396,500 retail tobacconists' shops; while in France, where tobacco is a government monopoly, there are only 45,000. On the other hand, the quality of French tobacco is notorious!

given of municipal business undertakings; it remains to consider similar enterprises on the part of the central government. At the beginning of the 19th century the state spent money on defence, the maintenance of order, and the administration of justice. While it thus provided favourable conditions for the accumulation of wealth by its subjects, its own activities were not of an economic character. By the end of the century it had embarked on many enterprises of a profitable nature which had previously been conducted by capitalists. The English government now acts as a letter-carrier, banker, insurance agent, ship builder, contractor, schoolmaster, analyst and doctor. In Egypt it has spent millions of pounds on irrigation; in India it derives a revenue of over £2,000,000 a year from its forests. "I am a coal and tin miner in Nigeria," said the Colonial Secretary in 1914, "a gold miner in Guiana. I seek timber in one colony, oil and nuts in another, cocoa in a third. Copra and copal, seisal and hemp, cotton, coffee, tobacco are common objects of my daily care." He might have added that in Malta he was a pawnbroker.

The war has led the British Government to undertake the whole importation of wheat, sugar, wool, and certain metals, to take over the working of railways and coal-mines, and to control almost every industry. "Whether we import or export, mine or manufacture, grow or prepare, transport or deliver, warehouse or retail any commodities whatsoever, we usually find, if we are capitalist *entrepreneurs*, that we can no longer do so exactly as we choose, with a view to deriving from the transaction the largest pecuniary profit; but that we have become subject to quite stringent regulations, which are more and more effectively enforced, often dictating to us the material we are to use, the price that we are to pay for it, the process that we are to employ, the wages that we shall pay, the particular kinds of commodities to be made, the order in which the several jobs are to be done, the person to whom the goods are to be delivered, the way they are to be transported and the price that we are to charge[1]." On

[1] *The New Statesman*, Nov. 17, 1917.

the other hand, their experience of Government Offices during the war has converted some Socialists to Individualism.

The altered nature of the state may be compared with the change in the British army. In the time of the Napoleonic Wars the British soldier was a professional, who had enlisted for life, and the only functions of the state were military. The men of the New Army were essentially civilians, who had thrown down their tools for the rifle, only to resume them after the war. Similarly, fighting is not the main business of the modern state, which is primarily a huge industrial concern.

This change in the functions of the state is seen even more clearly abroad. Half the railway mileage of the world is owned and worked by the government: only in Great Britain and the United States are railways left entirely to capitalists. Some countries own lines of steamboats, others canals, others mines, others shops. "If," says Mr Sidney Webb, "in *all* the countries of the civilised world, those industries and services which are to-day being governmentally administered *in one or other of the countries* were brought under public administration, such an increase, without adding a single fresh industry or service to those already successfully nationalised or municipalised in one country or another, would probably bring into the direct employment of the national or local government an actual majority of the adult population."

The modern state has not entered business because of the theoretical advantages of Socialism; it has done so step by step, on the advice of practical men, for practical reasons. A great propelling force has been the growing realisation of the solidarity of the race, especially in public health. This realisation has led the state to undertake enterprises which would not pay a capitalist, but which are for the common good. An isolation hospital, for instance, benefits, not so much those who are treated in it, as those who never enter it. Again, it is to the advantage of the community that water should be cheap and plentiful, that large towns should be provided with parks, and

that every citizen should be educated up to a certain standard. Apart from the fact that public money spent on such objects means public money saved in poor relief, in the detection of crime, and in the maintenance of criminals; it is to the advantage of the state that its subjects should be physically and mentally fit.

By the beginning of the 20th century, leading Socialists had given up the idea of constructing a ready-made Utopia by confiscating all private property at a stroke, and were willing to attain their ends by more gradual methods. This meant that they gave their support to such measures as Mr Lloyd George's 1909 budget, Old Age Pensions, and the Insurance Act, regarding them as steps towards the nationalisation of property. Modern Socialism, then, may be regarded as collective effort become self-conscious, as the application of democracy to economic life.

The opponents of this gradual extension of state action until complete Socialism is attained rely mainly on three arguments, which can only be briefly summarised. The first is economic. As we have seen, competition ensures that men who possess business ability should direct others, and that men without this ability should lose the capital they started with, and with it the power to control business organisation. The opponents of Socialism maintain that the only test of business ability is success in business, and that state officials with assured salaries could not pass or fail in this test. The second objection is biological, and consists in the social application of the laws of heredity known as Eugenics. The recent progress of biology has laid stress on the definite manner in which qualities are transmitted from one generation to another. Eugenists argue that, by helping the poor and the weak at the expense of the rich and the strong, the state is encouraging breeding from the worst stock, which would die out if the laws of nature were left to work without check[1]. The third objection is ethical, and asserts that if state action is carried much further, the working man will lose his

[1] It must be noticed, however, that Eugenists are anxious for state action to prevent the marriage of the unfit.

independence and his capacity to help himself. To deal with the Socialist reply to these arguments would raise further issues for which there is no space. Enough has been said to show that Socialism is likely to become one of the great questions of 20th century English politics. Before leaving the subject, we may notice one further point.

While the ideals sketched above represent the standpoint of educated Socialists, the Socialism preached to workmen is still largely Marxian. Holding that all wealth is produced by the labourer, it regards the capitalist as a parasite, and aims at immediate and sweeping change. During the coal strike of 1912 some of the extremists in the Rhondda Valley published a manifesto demanding "that the old policy of identity of interest between employers and ourselves be abolished and a policy of open hostility installed, and that a continual agitation be carried on in favour of increasing the minimum wage and shortening the hours of work until we have extracted the whole of the employer's profits." Such views are held by a very small proportion of workmen; but those who hold them are very active and look like capturing the organisation of some Trade Unions, because the more moderate men refuse to take the trouble to attend lodge meetings. They openly sow discontent against leaders of the old-fashioned type, whose ideas have been broadened by conferences with the masters. The result is a loosening of discipline and a tendency toward sectional strikes which alienates public sympathy and weakens the cause of labour.

It is important for the working-man to realise that, under competition or under Socialism, men of ability must lead, and that absolute equality is as impossible in modern industry as it would be in a man-of-war. If foreign competition is to be successfully met, British brains and British manual skill must both do their part. On the other hand, employers should understand that one of the main objects of Trade Unions is a recognition that artisans are not "hands", but men. It is our boast that

British soldiers are led by their officers, not driven. What is counted a virtue in war can hardly be considered a vice in peace.

It has been said that one of the characteristics of 19th century history has been the progress made in natural science. From the practical standpoint, science has been a more important factor in recent developments of the Industrial Revolution than in its early stages. From the theoretical point of view it has added enormously to human knowledge, and its more obvious lessons have been disseminated by newspapers and by popular lectures. Just as the Industrial Revolution has altered the natural world in which we live, so has science altered our mental world. The scientist regards the universe as a system, governed by fixed laws. As Professor Huxley said, "The form of the curl of every wave that breaks, wind-driven, on the sea-shore, and the direction of every particle of foam that flies before the gale, are the exact effects of definite causes." Perhaps the most important event in our period was the formulation of the theory of evolution. The idea that man was descended from a lower form of life was in existence before Darwin published his *Origin of Species* (1859); but it was he who first gave it a scientific basis. His conclusions, which were violently opposed at first, even by scientists, were gradually applied, not only to the other sciences, such as geology and physics, but to subjects like history and theology. The theory of evolution applies even to itself; for Darwinism has developed into Mendelism. The ordinary man is perhaps more impressed by the practical applications of science than by its mental outlook; but he is bound to learn something of the scientific spirit. Similarly, while science has had little direct influence on politics up to the present, it has formed an important element of the mental atmosphere in which political ideas grow up. Evolution, for instance, by emphasising the gradual character of the changes in Nature, predisposes many to condemn the violent changes in political and economic life advocated by extreme Socialists. On the other hand, it supplies arguments to the advocates of social reform. Evolution lays

more stress on the species than on the individual; but it values the individual for the sake of the race. Biology has come to the assistance of the humanitarian crusade for child welfare.

The literature, art, and music of the century cannot be discussed here. Their influence upon national character and tastes has been great; but the best art and literature of the 19th century is so well known as to need no description. From the historical and social point of view, the most important fact is the enormous increase of popular literature—seven-penny novels, cheap magazines, and newspapers. While the importance and influence of newspapers has steadily increased during the past century, it is hard to decide whether they do more good or harm. From the standpoint of the historian their most glaring fault is lack of proportion and perspective. Whether events are taking place on which the future of the world depends, or whether nothing of any real importance is happening, the size of the newspaper is the same. Again, editorial comment, especially on politics, is often violently prejudiced. One party consists of able and upright statesmen who can do no wrong; the other, of political adventurers who are at once incompetent and unscrupulous. It would indeed be difficult to write history from newspapers alone. The third great fault of newspapers is one which concerns, not so much the historian, as the more ignorant of their readers. A newspaper is primarily a business concern, which derives a large proportion of its income from advertisements. Most newspapers and magazines refuse to act as censors of the advertisements they receive, save to a limited extent. They open their columns to the fraudulent company promoter, to the money-lender who charges exorbitant interest, to the vendor of a patent medicine which cures all ills.

The most important social forces of the 19th century have now been described, and the question naturally arises whether, on the whole, they have made the nation stronger or weaker, better or worse, happier or less contented.

There is no doubt, in the first place, that the population and wealth of the country have increased to a remarkable extent. The population of the British Isles grew from 19,000,000 in 1816 to 41,458,000 in 1901, and wealth increased even more rapidly.

The peace revenue of the United Kingdom rose from £62,264,546 in 1816 to £198,243,000 in 1913–14, and the war revenue from £72,210,512 in 1815 to £707,235,000 in 1917–18.

When one examines the habits of the upper and middle classes, one notices an increase of luxury, but also much less coarseness, more rational amusements, and greater consideration for the lower classes.

The working class is better off than it was at the beginning of the 19th century. Now most artisans are paid good wages, and work for reasonable periods under healthy conditions. Their food is cheaper. They have conveniences which even the rich did not enjoy a century ago: the "penny in the slot" meter, for instance, enables all but the very poorest to use gas. There are few British artisans who cannot take their wives and families to the seaside for a fortnight every year, and some of them own motor bicycles, or even cheap cars.

On the other hand, it is easy to be too complacent. The men who lived in England a century ago had few of our advantages, but it is to them that we owe these advantages. They left their country better than they found it. Will future ages be able to say the same of us; or will they wonder at our tolerance of conditions which to them may seem monstrous? For there are still serious evils in our country which call for remedy. There are still "sweated" trades, in which the workers are paid such miserably low wages that they find it difficult to keep body and soul together. There is still a terrible amount of preventable disease—tuberculosis alone causes 50,000 deaths in these islands every year. In his annual report for 1915 the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education estimated that, out of nearly 6,000,000 elementary school children, no less than

1,000,000 were so physically or mentally defective as to be unable to derive reasonable benefit from the education provided by the state. Infantile mortality (91 per 1,000 in 1916) is still much higher than it need be. This may be attributed partly to ignorance: the death-rate among infants at Ghent fell from 260 to 34 per 1,000 after the establishment there of the first school for mothers (1904). The main cause, however, is overcrowding: in some of our most prosperous mining and manufacturing districts the rate is four times as high as that of Irish rural districts, or even that of some English towns which have not been much affected by the Industrial Revolution. In the census of 1911 there were over 4,000,000 people in the United Kingdom living more than two to a room; in such a progressive city as Glasgow a quarter of the inhabitants live three to a room. It has been estimated that a million new houses ought to be built as part of the reconstruction after the war.

All this, it may be said, is only the material side of life. There are observers who declare that the division of labour focuses the life of the factory employee to a tiny point, that by going through the same operation day after day, and week after week, he loses his individuality and becomes a mere cog in the machinery. When he leaves the factory, they say, there is nothing in his surroundings to elevate and broaden his mind. He derives his ideas of art from the "cinema", of music from the music hall, of literature from the evening paper, and of politics and political economy from noisy demagogues. It is impossible to deny that there is much truth in these statements. The work of the medieval craftsman was infinitely more varied than that of the modern artisan. But the point is that the Industrial Revolution has come to stay, that its social effects were seen at their worst at the beginning of the 19th century, and that they have been steadily improving ever since. The working man has far more opportunities, not only of improving his position, but of improving himself, than he had a century ago. He has his leisure, which he can either use or waste.

To sum up, the 19th century was a period of big things, of the construction of bridges thousands of yards, and of railways thousands of miles in length, of the growth of enormous towns, of the formation of huge trading and manufacturing concerns. The vast scale of modern enterprise would become oppressive were it not for the other characteristics of the period, the steady growth of liberty, the widening of opportunity, the uprooting of abuses, the greater sympathy for the unfortunate. When one examines the social evils of a century ago and sees how successfully they have been attacked, one must needs be an optimist.

PART II

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

INTRODUCTORY

At the outset of this chapter we should remind ourselves of the distinction between colonies and dependencies, between the "sphere of settlement" and the "sphere of rule". If we take extreme cases, such as Australia and Nigeria, we notice that the former contains a large number of white men, mainly of British origin, who are engaged in various occupations, who have made the colony their real home, where they bring up their children, and who enjoy complete rights of self-government under the British Crown. In the latter the Governor is practically despotic; nearly all the inhabitants are native; the small white population consists almost entirely of government officials and traders, who send their children home to be educated, and who have themselves to come home at regular intervals for the sake of their health. At the root of all other differences lies the difference in climate, and since there is no sharp division between the temperate and tropical zones, the British Empire contains examples of all the political gradations between the typical colony and the typical dependency.

This broad distinction was not easy to discern a century ago. The earliest colonies, it is true, had enjoyed considerable political liberty, but their economic life had always been regulated in the supposed interests of the mother country. The Mercantile System, founded during the Commonwealth and extended during the 18th century, made the test of Empire economic. The material welfare of the colonies was subordinated to that of Great Britain, whose manufacturers and ship-owners enjoyed a monopoly in colonial markets and ports. The interests of the colonists were regarded only when they did not clash with those of Englishmen at home: colonial products which could not be grown in England were given a preference over those of foreign countries.

This point of view was challenged when the revolt of the American Colonies emphasised other than economic factors. Their loss ushered in a period of depression and disillusionment. At the close of the American War several other countries possessed richer and more populous colonies than Great Britain. The British Empire then consisted of the scattered dominions of the East India Company, a fraction of the modern Dominion of Canada, Newfoundland, Gibraltar, Jamaica, Barbados and a few small West Indian Islands, and some trading stations on the West Coast of Africa. Australia had just been formally annexed, but was not used even as a convict settlement. Such an Empire, it was thought, hardly needed a separate department for its administration : in 1782 the Board of Trade and Plantations was abolished, and the colonies were placed under the control of the Home Secretary.

Thanks to her sea-power, Great Britain conquered nearly all the colonies of France and her allies during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars (1793–1815). At the Congress of Vienna she restored most of them, retaining Malta, the Ionian Islands[1], the Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius, Ceylon, Heligoland[2], St Lucia, Trinidad and Demerara. The first five of these show the importance attached to India ; Heligoland had been seized as a base for smuggling when Napoleon closed the German ports to British goods ; and the West Indian islands were valued for their trade.

The capture of enemy colonies during the war had suggested the possibility of rebuilding the Empire and had led to the appointment of a new Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. There was, however, an important change of policy. Before the American War the colonies had enjoyed considerable powers of self-government and had been mainly responsible for their own safety. Now they were brought more closely under the political, as well as the economic, control of Great Britain, who in return undertook their defence. As an illustration of the

[1] Greek since 1864. [2] German since 1890.

interference of the mother country in the purely domestic affairs of the colonies, we may notice that a social and economic revolution like the abolition of slavery could be accomplished by the British Government against the will of the colonists affected.

In the second quarter of the 19th century the Mercantile System disappeared piece-meal under the attacks of Huskisson and Peel, while Durham's mission to Canada in 1838 paved the way for colonial self-government. Between 1846 and 1872 Canada, Newfoundland, the Australian Colonies (except Westralia), New Zealand and Cape Colony were given full control over their internal affairs, including their fiscal policy.

Roughly speaking, the Tories gave the colonies economic, the Whigs political, freedom, i.e. each party surrendered what the other prized. The Tories abolished the Mercantile System in the interests of Great Britain, not of the colonists; the Whigs had valued colonies almost entirely for the sake of their regulated trade, and now questioned their worth. While the Whigs undoubtedly believed they were conferring a priceless boon on the colonies in granting them self-government, they took little pains to make the gift acceptable: they left the impression that they were eager to rid themselves of the burden of Empire and to leave the colonists to sink or swim by themselves. To the Tories the political authority thus given up had been the main argument in favour of Empire: if colonies did not add directly to the power of Great Britain, what was their use? Then, in the sixties, all British troops were withdrawn from the colonies, with the exception of some few garrisons at important points. This was really the strategic side of the army reforms consequent on the Crimean War, and was based on the sound principle of concentration instead of dissipation of force. But this was the very period when the doctrines of the Manchester School were beginning to exert their greatest influence on English politics. Adam Smith had concluded his *Wealth of Nations* by declaring that, if any of the provinces of the British Empire could not be made to contribute towards the support

of the whole Empire, Great Britain should free herself from the expense of defending them in time of war and of supporting any part of their civil or military establishments in time of peace. His disciples found the numerous colonial wars, particularly in South Africa and New Zealand, an obstacle to their programme of "Peace, Retrenchment and Reform". Until the eighties, they did much to popularise among all parties the view that the inevitable result of colonial self-government would be separation, and that only a realisation of this fact could prevent bad feeling when the dissolution came.

So far we have regarded the Empire objectively, as it appeared to British statesmen; but the attitude of the colonies towards Great Britain during this period was hardly more encouraging. They showed a disposition to guard their newly-won rights with the utmost jealousy, to talk of separation if they were crossed in any way, to forget that they still owed their freedom and safety to the country which had spent blood and treasure on their foundation.

The relations between Great Britain and the self-governing colonies have often been translated into terms of family life. During this period Great Britain may be compared to a warm-hearted but crusty old squire, whose high-spirited sons feel that they are old enough to be their own masters and to go into the world to seek their fortunes. At one time the father would have tried to keep them under his control a little longer; but he has never forgotten the violent quarrel he had on this very subject with his eldest son. His determination to avoid the recurrence of such a scene makes him yield with a readiness which his sons interpret as indifference to their welfare. They go their own way; they meet with difficulties; they learn from their mistakes; they achieve great things; but they rarely write home about their failures and their successes.

Fortunately this is not the end of the parable: forces were already at work which were destined to bring father and sons together once more. Before, however, we examine the tenden-

cies of the last generation, we should study the separate fortunes of those colonies and dependencies which have most affected the history of Great Britain during the past century. It will be convenient to begin with Canada, whose political development preceded and influenced that of the other self-governing colonies.

CHAPTER XI

CANADA

THE history of British Canada may be said to begin with the Seven Years' War, with the work of Pitt, Wolfe, and Amherst. It is true that part of the modern Dominion was already British: the Hudson Bay Company's charter included that vast and ill-defined territory known as Rupert's Land, and Nova Scotia had been British for half a century. But Canada proper, the valley of the St Lawrence, was discovered and settled by the French.

The first impressions of the French explorers were unfavourable. The north bank of the St Lawrence is rocky and barren; the south bank is the mountainous Gaspé Peninsula. Above Quebec, however, there is a fertile strip of plain on both sides of the river, which became the home of French colonists. The natural strength of Quebec and the fact that it was the gateway into the colony made it the capital of French Canada. The growth of Montreal, on an island at the junction of the St Lawrence and the Ottawa, and just below the first rapids, is equally easy to understand. On the south bank of the river the plain rises towards the Appalachian Mountains; on the north bank it is bounded by the southern rim of the "Archaean horseshoe", the granite plateau which slopes gently from east, south, and west towards Hudson Bay[1].

Here, then, in a string of villages along both banks between Quebec and Montreal, dwelt the 60,000 Frenchmen who be-

[1] The boundary of this barren district is roughly a line drawn from the mouth of the Mackenzie to the Lake of the Woods and thence by way of Georgian Bay to the south-east of Labrador. Here and there are folds of rock which are very rich in nickel, silver, copper, iron and other pre-carboniferous minerals.

came British subjects at the Peace of Paris in 1763. From the first they had been kept in restraint: French Canada was the work of the Crown, and its government was highly centralized and despotic. The *habitans* held their farms on a feudal tenure, paying their *seigniors* certain fixed dues, fines on alienation, and one fish in every eleven they caught. The labour services which were so irksome to the serf in France were unknown in Canada. Beyond this settled district there roamed the *voyageurs* and *coureurs de bois*, who made their way as far as the Rockies, fraternising with the Indians and partly adopting their manners, subject to no discipline such as bound their compatriots, and therefore leaving no trace of their existence in the Canada of to-day.

What policy was Great Britain to adopt towards her new subjects? On the one hand, it could hardly be doubted that the future of North America lay with the Anglo-Saxon race, which outnumbered the French by twenty to one. On the other hand, the Prussian policy of rigidly suppressing all types of civilisation but its own had not been invented, and, if it had, would have been contrary to British traditions. So the French Canadians were guaranteed the free exercise of their religion (at a time when Roman Catholicism was proscribed in Great Britain) and were allowed to retain their civil, though not their criminal, law. The first Governors were soldiers, whose authority was little restricted by the existence after 1774 of a Legislative Council appointed by the Crown. On the whole they showed great sympathy and tact in dealing with the Canadians, who had always been accustomed to autocratic rule. When the thirteen American colonies revolted, their political theories awoke no echo in Canada, which remained loyal to Great Britain.

Not all the American colonists rebelled. Many who were willing to admit the existence of grievances and abuses held that they were not serious enough to justify what was practically civil war. Large numbers of loyalists fought as militiamen in the British armies. At the Treaty of Versailles (1783) the

Americans promised that a full amnesty should be extended to these men and that they should be allowed to resume possession of their property. This pledge was very imperfectly redeemed. Some of the loyalists were tarred and feathered, others were shot or hanged, and most of the remainder were driven into exile.

Even in the early days of the war the more pacific of the loyalists who lived near the coast had taken ship to Nova Scotia, whose population of 14,000 was trebled by 1784. Of the immigrants some 10,000 settled on the mainland, west of the Isthmus of Chignecto, and in that year this district was made into the separate colony of New Brunswick, with a representative assembly like that of the parent colony. The other exiles, to the number of over 10,000, went to the upper St Lawrence, to the triangle between Georgian Bay, the Detroit, and the junction of the Ottawa and the St Lawrence. This country, which was a continuation of the fertile St Lawrence plain, contained only a handful of French settlers and was in a wild state. Many of the newcomers were professional men whose previous experience had not fitted them for the hardships of a pioneer's life.

The loyalists who settled in Canada demanded the free institutions to which they had previously been accustomed, and which had been given at once to those who had gone to New Brunswick. But if Canada were granted representative institutions, how would the two races work together? After much deliberation, Pitt divided Canada into two, with the Ottawa as the boundary, giving each half a representative Assembly and a Legislative Council, whose members were appointed for life by the Crown. Trade and customs duties remained under the control of the Home Government; but the revenues derived from them were placed at the disposal of the colonial legislatures (1791). Thus the British in Upper, and the French in Lower, Canada would, so it was thought, be able to manage their own affairs without friction.

For a short time this system seemed to work well. In the American War of 1812–1814 Upper Canada saved itself by its own efforts from the determined attacks made by the Americans, and the French Canadians repulsed the one serious attempt directed against Lower Canada. Yet, a quarter of a century after these proofs of loyalty, rebellions broke out in both colonies. It is worth our while to examine the causes of discontent and the remedies which were applied, since they have a direct bearing on the relations between a colony and the mother country.

It will be simpler to take the case of Upper Canada first. At the outset, we must notice the importance of immigration. The misery of the working classes in Great Britain after Waterloo led to the formation of emigration societies, composed largely of philanthropists who wished to send the unemployed to countries where labour was needed. The stream of emigration from the United Kingdom to Canada steadily increased until 1831, when 50,000 immigrants arrived at Quebec. The great majority naturally went on to Upper Canada. What was the nature of the political and economic system they found there?

The constitution of 1791 bore a close resemblance to the English constitution in the time of Edward I or Henry VIII. The executive power was in the hands of the Crown, represented by the Governor, who was assisted by an Executive Council of nominees. The elective Assembly could criticise, but not control, the action of the officials, who were responsible solely to the Governor, just as he was responsible to the British Colonial Secretary. Such a system enables the Executive to keep in touch with public opinion without losing its freedom of action. But the British immigrants into Upper Canada had been accustomed to the doctrine of ministerial responsibility, and regarded an Executive which was not responsible to the Legislature as an anachronism. The higher posts in the administration were monopolised by a group who came to be known as the "Family Compact", though they were not so much a caste as

a clique. It is only fair to say that as a body these men were able and patriotic, and that the majority in the Assembly frequently approved of their policy. When, however, the Opposition gained a majority, it did not in consequence become the Government: its resolutions could do nothing to remove the Family Compact from power.

Closely connected with the constitutional dispute was the land question. All lands in Canada which were not in private ownership in 1763 (which meant practically the whole of Upper Canada) belonged to the Crown by right of conquest. Unfortunately the Government made lavish grants of land without insisting on its occupation and cultivation. The very Act which aimed at preventing the grant of more than 200 acres to any one person was used to give some individuals grants of 5,000 or 10,000 acres each. Out of the 17,600,000 acres which had been surveyed in 1838, only 1,147,000 remained at the disposal of the Crown. Of the lands which had been alienated, only 100,000 acres had been sold, and less than 600,000 acres had been disposed of between 1825 and 1838, when the population had increased from 150,000 to 400,000. By far the greater part of the land had fallen into the hands of speculators who had no intention of clearing it, but hoped that its value would be increased by the labour of *bona fide* settlers in the neighbourhood.

Another feature of the land system aroused religious dissensions. The Act of 1791 provided that whenever Crown lands were alienated, one-eighth was to be reserved for the endowment of a Protestant clergy. In practice more than one-seventh was so reserved, and none of this land was sold or cultivated before 1827. A fierce dispute arose as to the meaning of the term "Protestant", the Family Compact alleging that it meant Anglican, the Opposition protesting against the endowment of a Church whose adherents were less numerous than the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics.

Owing to the reckless grants of Crown lands and the existence of the "Clergy Reserves", the settlement of Upper Canada was

seriously hampered. Many an immigrant was discouraged to find that the holding assigned to him was separated from the nearest farm or town by a trackless wilderness, and that, even if he cleared the ground, he would find it almost impossible to take his produce to market. More than half the immigrants into Upper Canada gave up the attempt in despair and went to the United States, where they would find popular government, good roads, and close settlement.

The elements of discontent were organised by Mackenzie, a fiery journalist who was five times expelled from the Assembly. In 1836 an equally hot-headed man, Sir F. B. Head, became Governor. By the end of 1837 Head had goaded the extreme reformers into the belief that their only hope lay in an armed rising. In December a feeble attack on Toronto by Mackenzie and a few hundred followers was easily repulsed, and the rebellion in Upper Canada was virtually over.

In Lower Canada there were no religious disputes, and the disposal of Crown lands did not directly affect the French Canadians of the seigniories. The main cause of unrest was racial jealousy, which first appeared at the beginning of the 19th century. The Englishmen who settled in Lower Canada were mainly engaged in trade, which they created and monopolised. They accordingly advocated the taxation of land, while the French wished the whole revenue to be raised by customs duties. This intrusion of a bustling, alien, commercial element alarmed the French, who, feeling their nationality threatened, determined to use to the utmost the powers granted them under the constitution of 1791. The Governor might appoint Englishmen as officials, but he could not pay them unless the Assembly passed the Budget. Unaccustomed to representative institutions, and resenting their exclusion from office, the French members of the Assembly used their overwhelming majority without moderation and made the constitution unworkable. They recast Budgets, cutting down or abolishing the salaries of officials who had displeased them, and

spending the sums thus gained on local bridges or roads. They worried the Government by perpetual enquiries and impeachments. They made a habit of limiting the force of the laws they passed to one year. The most conciliatory Governors were unable to work harmoniously with them, and not all Governors were conciliatory.

In everyday life the two races had no relations with each other. They would not meet at dinner-parties or on charity committees; at agricultural shows there were separate competitions and separate prizes; on the St Lawrence there were English steamboats for the English, and French steamboats for the French.

The continued refusal of the Assembly to make provision for the administration at last roused the Home Government to action. In the spring of 1837 Lord John Russell proposed in the House of Commons that the Receiver-General of Lower Canada should be empowered to pay the salaries of the permanent officials without authorisation from the Legislature. This brought matters to a head. The summer was spent by both sides in drilling, and in November they came into collision in the streets of Montreal. Thanks largely to the influence of the Roman Catholic bishop and his clergy, only a very small proportion of the French Canadians took part in the rising which followed. A sufficient number of troops had been concentrated to deal with it, and order was soon restored.

Though the rebellions of 1837 were the work of insignificant minorities and were easily suppressed, they made a change inevitable. The British Government suspended the constitutions of the two Canadas and sent out Lord Durham to report on the affairs of British North America. The son-in-law of Earl Grey, Durham had held office in the Whig cabinet, and had been a member of the committee which drafted the Reform Bill. A man of brilliant parts and remarkable foresight, he was wanting in tact and could not control his temper in debate. These characteristics were clearly revealed in his mission. His

use of the dictatorial powers conferred on him was sharply criticised in Parliament; he received only lukewarm support from Lord Melbourne; and he resigned his post after having been in Canada for less than six months. His report, which was published in January 1839, attracted considerable attention, and stimulated discussion of colonial problems by reason of its vigour and extreme frankness.

While analysing the causes of unrest and recommending particular remedies for particular evils, Durham insisted that the root of all the discontent was the fact that the Canadians were not allowed to govern themselves. "It is not," he wrote, "by weakening, but strengthening the influence of the people on its Government; by confining within much narrower bounds than those hitherto allotted to it, and not by extending the interference of the imperial authorities in the details of colonial affairs, that I believe that harmony is to be restored." He emphasised the differences between the constitution of the Canadas and that of Great Britain. In the former, the Governor's advisers held office as long as they retained his confidence. The Assembly might impeach them for grave offences, but could not procure their dismissal for mere incompetence, or even for carrying out a policy of which it disapproved. The British cabinet, on the other hand, was responsible to Parliament: once it lost the confidence of the House of Commons it resigned, and its opponents came into power. In this game of party politics the Colonial Secretary, to whom the Colonial Governor was responsible, was liable to be expelled from office with his colleagues, and the new Secretary might appoint a new Governor, who might choose different advisers. Thus the Executive of a colony, which remained unaffected by adverse votes of the Colonial Assembly, might be changed by a vote of the British House of Commons on a question of purely British interest. While, again, the British Parliament had the right of supervising the whole field of administration as well as policy by questioning each minister about his department, the colonial

Executive Councils did not work departmentally. Further, the fact that the leaders of the Opposition in the British Parliament looked forward to having their turn of office restrained them from making intemperate and unjust attacks on the Government, and from giving rash pledges to the people which they might be called on to redeem.

Therefore, said Durham, the colonial Governors should choose their ministers from the party which had a majority in the Assembly. The colonists might be trusted to know their own interests best: if they placed incompetent or corrupt ministers in office, they would have no grievance against the mother country, but would have only themselves to blame.

This proposal was far in advance of the age. The great majority of English statesmen argued that the colonial Governor, being already responsible to the British Government, could not act on the advice of ministers who were responsible only to the colonial Legislature. Durham met this objection by drawing a distinction between imperial affairs and matters of purely colonial interest. In the former the Governor would act on his own responsibility as a British official bound by the instructions of the Colonial Secretary; in the latter he would act as the representative, not of the British cabinet, but of the King, and, like the King, he would take the advice of his ministers.

While thus advocating responsible government for the Canadians, Durham was unwilling that the British residents in Lower Canada should be placed at the mercy of the French majority, and accordingly insisted that the two Canadas should be united. This was to be merely the prelude to a confederation of the whole of British North America. He had no sympathy with those statesmen who wished to keep the colonies small and divided, that they might realise their dependence upon Great Britain. His aim was rather to build them up into strong nations, to give them a proper pride, and to make them feel that the mother country also was proud of their growth. Such

a policy, he believed, so far from breaking up the Empire, would prove its surest bulwark.

For Durham was a strong Imperialist. In an age of little faith he was not ashamed of being thought a visionary. Nor did his Radicalism, in laying stress on the rights of the colonies, forget the debt they owed to Great Britain. "The country," he wrote at the beginning of his report, "which has founded and maintained these Colonies at a vast expense of blood and treasure, may justly expect its compensation in turning their unappropriated resources to the account of its own redundant population; they are the rightful patrimony of the English people, the ample appanage which God and Nature have set aside in the New World for those whose lot has assigned them but insufficient portions in the Old." And at the end: "The experiment of keeping colonies and governing them well, ought at least to have a trial, ere we abandon for ever the vast dominion which might supply the wants of our surplus population, and raise up millions of fresh consumers of our manufactures, and producers of a supply for our wants."

In 1840 the British Parliament passed an act for the union of the two Canadas with a single Legislature, consisting of the Governor, a nominated Legislative Council, and an elective Legislative Assembly. While giving the Assembly full control over finance, Parliament guarded against two dangers of the past. The establishment of a Civil List secured officials their salaries, and the provision that all money votes were to be initiated by the Governor prevented private members from introducing chaos into the finances. Lord John Russell, however, while warning the Governor that abuses of patronage must cease, and that he should appoint ministers in whom the Assembly had confidence, was far from accepting Durham's proposal of responsible Government. Canadian ministers were still in fact, as well as in theory, merely the advisers of the Governor, who had a policy of his own. But in 1846 Lord Elgin, Durham's son-in-law, was sent out as Governor by

Lord Grey, the new Colonial Secretary, who was himself Durham's brother-in-law. On his arrival in 1847 Elgin accepted the Conservative ministers whom he found in office. When, however, they were defeated at the next election, instead of retaining them, or himself choosing new advisers from the party in the majority, he sent for the Liberal leader and commissioned him to form a ministry. In his relations with his ministers, as well as in his appointment of them, Elgin acted the part of a constitutional king. A little later the Maritime Provinces also gained responsible government of the British type[1].

The early years of Lord Elgin's governorship were marked by grave economic distress. The repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 deprived Canadian farmers and millers of the preference they had enjoyed in the British market. The fall in the value of all property reacted upon trade. When the country was thus impoverished it was called on to support the starving and fever-stricken Irish who began to arrive in large numbers in 1847. The distress, which was directly attributed to Great Britain, threw a severe strain on the loyalty of the Canadians, some of whom thought they would be better off as part of the U.S.A. In these circumstances Elgin was able to render great services to both the mother country and the colonies. He persuaded the Home Government to bear part of the expense of relieving the destitute immigrants and to repeal the Navigation Laws (1849), thus enabling Canada to engage in direct trade with other countries. It was largely owing to his perseverance and tact that in 1854 the U.S.A. concluded a Reciprocity Treaty with British North America, which allowed free trade in certain food-stuffs and raw materials, and gave the subjects of both countries reciprocal rights of navigation and fishing.

[1] They also had suffered from the abuses of the old system. In a single day in 1767 the whole of Prince Edward Island was divided among a few dozen Englishmen, who made no attempt to develop the island. In 1827 all the minerals of Cape Breton Island and New Brunswick were given to the Duke of York, who handed them over to his creditors to work.

Up to this time the relations of Canada, or rather of Great Britain, with the U.S.A. had been unsatisfactory. In addition to the two wars there had been two boundary disputes which might well have led to war. The clause of the Treaty of Versailles which defined the boundary between the U.S.A. and New Brunswick was so faulty in its geography that it could not be given a literal interpretation. When the territory in dispute began to attract settlers, the governments of Maine and New Brunswick both tried to exercise authority over it. After much bitterness had been aroused, Great Britain and the U.S.A. finally came to terms in the Ashburton Treaty (1842), by which the Americans gained more than they had any right to expect. The Canadians were naturally dissatisfied with the treaty, and accused Great Britain of lukewarmness where their interests were at stake. Soon the question of the Oregon boundary became acute. In 1818 the 49th parallel had been made the boundary from the Lake of the Woods to the Rocky Mountains, beyond which the "Oregon territory" was to be jointly occupied. In the early forties large numbers of Americans settled in this territory, and the Democratic party wished to claim the whole of it as far north as the Russian boundary. In 1846, however, it was agreed that the boundary along the 49th parallel should be prolonged to the coast, and that Vancouver Island should remain British.

In spite of these disputes, Canada could not help being greatly affected by the U.S.A.: the law of political gravitation made her civilisation and economic life resemble that of her great neighbour more than that of Great Britain. There were times, indeed, both before and after the Reciprocity Treaty, when it seemed her destiny to lose her political individuality and to be merged in the U.S.A. No man did more to avert such a fate than John A. Macdonald.

Macdonald (1815–1891) was Scotch by birth but Canadian by upbringing, for his parents emigrated to Upper Canada when he was five years of age. Entering the Canadian Assembly as

a Conservative in 1844, he devoted himself seriously to politics. Not scorning at first to learn from men of inferior ability but greater experience, he soon completed his apprenticeship, and displayed a capacity for handling men and a readiness to adapt himself to the conditions of the time which made him the dominating force in Canadian politics for nearly half a century. There was some truth in the accusation of his opponents that he was an adroit party leader rather than a statesman: his readiness to change his weapons almost amounted to shiftiness. But from first to last he was guided by one great principle—belief in the Empire. This creed had a twofold aspect: in the darkest hour he would never listen to any talk of separation from Great Britain, and he never lost faith in Canada's future. He did much to translate Durham's ideals into reality.

In 1854 Macdonald succeeded in forming a coalition of moderate Liberals and Conservatives which remained in power until 1861. In the first year of its existence the Liberal-Conservative ministry concluded the Reciprocity Treaty with the U.S.A., abolished the seigniorial rights in Lower Canada (with compensation to the seigniors), and finally settled the difficulty of the Clergy Reserves by secularising them and devoting their revenues to municipal purposes. The Budget of 1859 reduced the duties on raw materials, but retained at the existing rate those on luxuries and articles which might be manufactured in Canada. This provoked a remonstrance from the Home Government, which had expected the colonies to follow its lead in adopting Free Trade. The Canadian ministry, however, successfully asserted its right to decide its own fiscal policy, though Durham would have placed it under the control of Great Britain.

The fall of Macdonald's government in 1861 was followed by political chaos, in which parties were so confused that four ministries held office in three years. This deadlock was mainly due to the demand of Western Canada for representation in proportion to its population, since, though it contained

300,000 more inhabitants than Eastern Canada, it sent the same number of representatives to the Assembly. The French Canadians, however, pointed out that they had acquiesced in equal representation when the Union Act was passed, though their province was then by far the more populous. Still, the disproportion between the two provinces was becoming greater every year, and the Western Canadians urged their case with more and more emphasis. If, however, they were given an increased number of members, the French in Eastern Canada might once more feel that their nationality was threatened, and old sores might be re-opened. It seemed to the leading men of all parties that the only solution was to be found in federation. In 1864 George Brown, a noted Radical politician and editor, consented to join Macdonald (whom he personally detested) for the sole purpose of carrying federation into effect. Just at this time representatives of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island were discussing a federal union of the Maritime Provinces. To them came delegates from Canada to propose a still wider scheme, which they willingly embraced. The difficulties which appeared when the details came to be settled were removed by the tact and patience of Macdonald and by the steady support he received from Brown.

The more the idea was examined, the more arguments were found in its favour. The great need of British North America was easier communication. The wonderful system of rivers made it easy to get about the country in canoes, which rarely had to be carried more than a mile or two at the portages. But the transport of bulky goods was another matter. The system of canals which now avoids the rapids and falls from Lake Superior to Montreal was still incomplete. Land communication between Canada and New Brunswick was so poor that, during the six months when the St Lawrence was frozen, Canada was dependent on American ports. In the whole of British North America there were only 2,000 miles of railway. The economic isolation of the colonies could be broken down only

by common action, for which there was no political machinery: each colony communicated only with the Colonial Office in London.

The isolation of the colonies was not only inconvenient, but dangerous. During the American Civil War the Northern States resented the attitude of Great Britain and, with less excuse, that of the Canadians, whom they accused of not maintaining a strict neutrality. When the war ended in 1866, the American Government refused to renew the Reciprocity Treaty of 1854, and at first did nothing to prevent Fenian raids on Canada from being organised on American soil. The possibility of war between Great Britain and the U.S.A. made Canadians feel that closer union was necessary for their defence. Then, again, what was to be the future of the vast and thinly-populated territories to the west of Lake Winnipeg? It was doubtful whether the Hudson Bay Company could prevent them from becoming part of the U.S.A., as Texas had done, and there was no Canadian authority strong enough to assume responsibility for them. In spite, then, of the natural reluctance of the existing Governments to surrender part of their powers, the arguments for a central authority were too weighty to be rejected, and on July 1st, 1867 the Dominion of Canada came into being.

The original members of the Dominion were Ontario (Western Canada), Quebec (Eastern Canada), Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The Dominion Executive consisted of the Crown, represented by a Governor-General, and a Privy Council, corresponding to the British Cabinet. The Legislature consisted of the Crown, a Senate and a House of Commons. The members of the Senate were to be appointed by the Governor-General and Privy Council, each Province being entitled to 24 Senators, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick being regarded for this purpose as one Province. The House of Commons consisted of representatives from the different Provinces in proportion to their population, elected under the existing franchises.

The constitution of the Dominion is federal, i.e. the Provincial Parliaments do not derive their powers from a grant of the Dominion Parliament but from the written constitution (the British North America Act, 1867). In planning a federal system Canada could not look to Great Britain for precedents, but naturally turned to the U.S.A. In the distribution of powers between the central and local governments Canada gives more to the former than does the U.S.A. In the American constitution the legislative powers of Congress are enumerated, all others being left to the States. In the Dominion of Canada the Provincial powers are enumerated, and the Dominion Parliament, in addition to certain specified powers, possesses all the residuary powers. The Provincial Governors and the judges of the superior courts are appointed by the Dominion Government, which can disallow measures of the Provincial Parliaments.

While the respective spheres of the central and local governments had to be defined by a written constitution, to prevent one from encroaching on the other, the working of the Parliamentary system was not stereotyped. It was assumed that the Cabinet system would continue, based on British precedents, but having freedom to adapt itself to different conditions. This idea of flexibility, of organic growth, contrasts with the rigidity of the American constitution.

The first Prime Minister of the Dominion was Sir John A. Macdonald (created a K.C.B. as a reward for his part in bringing about confederation). His dream of a Canada which should extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific was incapable of realisation so long as the Hudson Bay Company retained its charter over the country between Ontario and the Rockies. In its anxiety to maintain its trade in furs, the company had steadily set its face against immigration: animals were of more account than men[1]. Canadian public opinion had for some

[1] The bison was all but extinct, but there were still vast numbers of black and grizzly bears, of deer, wolves, and foxes.

time regarded the Company as an anachronism, and in 1857 the British House of Commons had appointed a committee to enquire into its affairs. The Company's officials had stoutly maintained that its territories were entirely unsuitable for agriculture, but this was questioned by Canadians. In any case, there was a strong political reason for putting an end to the Company's rule, as its lack of proper administrative machinery and of an armed force made it an insecure bulwark against American encroachment. Now that the British North American colonies could speak with one voice, they were able to bring far more pressure to bear on the Company and on Great Britain. In 1869 it surrendered its rights to the Dominion in return for £300,000 and an extensive grant of land. A year later the Province of Manitoba was organised, its Lieutenant-Governor being given authority over the rest of the Company's former possessions, which were known as the North-West Territories[1].

It was not enough for the Dominion to acquire these new territories: they must be planted with men. Between them and the settled portions of Ontario lay a stretch of desert—the toe of the Archaean horse-shoe, which here extends across the whole width of Canada, from Lake Superior to Hudson Bay. Macdonald determined that a railway should be built to connect not only prairie-land, but British Columbia, with the valley of the St Lawrence.

A land of giant trees and lofty mountains, British Columbia bears little resemblance to the rest of Canada. The first Europeans to visit it came by sea, and it was not until 1793 that Alexander Mackenzie, an intrepid explorer in the service of the Hudson Bay Company, crossed the Peace River Pass and reached the Pacific coast. Other officials of the Company completed the exploration of New Caledonia, as it was then called, and established depots for the fur trade: in a single

[1] The Liberal Government of 1873 placed the North-West Territories under a separate Lieutenant-Governor and Council.

year 30,000 beaver skins were brought to Fort Vancouver. When in 1846 Vancouver Island was recognised by the U.S.A. as British, its administration was entrusted to the Company. In 1849 it was made a Crown Colony, and in 1856 it was given a representative Assembly. In the latter year gold was discovered on the Fraser River and subsequently in other places in New Caledonia. The roads which were made to the mining centres encouraged the immigration of farmers. The new-comers could not be expected to remain under the rule of the Company: in 1858 New Caledonia was made a Crown Colony, and in 1866 it was united with Vancouver Island as British Columbia.

In those days British Columbia contained less than 20,000 white residents, and its only communication with Canada was by way of the U.S.A. Thus Macdonald's offer to build a railway across the Continent within ten years, if British Columbia entered the Dominion forthwith, was a tempting bait, which was accepted in 1871. When, in 1873, Prince Edward Island came in, the Dominion included the whole of British North America except Newfoundland, which remained outside in the hope of securing better financial terms than she was then offered. Macdonald had realised his dream of a Canada stretching from ocean to ocean; he had now to redeem his promise to British Columbia. It was decided that the Dominion should not itself construct the Canadian Pacific Railway, but should subsidise a company. The promoter of one of the two companies which were rivals for the contract made large contributions to the Conservative party chest, and the discovery of this fact produced a scandal which led to Macdonald's resignation (1873).

The Liberal Government of 1873–8 lacked Macdonald's faith. Regarding the Canadian Pacific Railway as an over-ambitious scheme which could only end in disaster, it determined to use water-transport as far as possible, and to construct the railway as a public enterprise. In spite of angry protests from British

Columbia, the work proceeded so slowly that only a negligible portion was ready in 1878. The Liberals had some excuse for their caution in the economic depression of those years. Agriculture suffered from a series of bad harvests, and industry from the "dumping" of American manufactures. Seizing his opportunity, Macdonald preached a "National Policy" of protective tariffs, which gave his party an overwhelming majority at the elections of 1878. The Budget of 1879 gave effect to his ideas by greatly increasing the duties on all goods which could be made in Canada, the existing duty of $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. being retained on the rest for the sake of revenue.

It was known that on his return to power Macdonald would press forward the building of the railway. In 1881 it was announced that its construction would be undertaken by a new Company, which was to receive a subsidy of $25,000,000 and a grant of 25,000,000 acres of land, in addition to the portions of the railway already built by the state. Work was begun at once from both ends, and, in spite of great engineering and financial difficulties, the railway was completed in November 1885. Macdonald died in 1891, before his boldness had been justified by time; but he had no misgivings. To him may well be applied Sir C. P. Lucas's appreciation of Lord Durham: "It is the common failing of political thinkers and writers to devote their whole attention to laws and constitutions, and what is called political science, and to overlook the tremendous effect which science in the stricter sense, invention, and engineering, has had and will have in an increasing degree upon politics and history. It was one of Lord Durham's supreme merits that, politician as he was, and devoted to constitutional reform, he appreciated public works present or future at their full value, and appreciated them not merely for their direct material results, but also, and in a greater degree, because of their bearing on politics. They appealed to his constructive mind as being communications, as making divided parts into one, as making small things into great, as linking one home to another, one little town

to another little town, one province to another, one united group of provinces to the mother country."

Macdonald's death was a serious blow to his party, which was defeated at the elections of 1896. The Liberals, under Mr (later Sir) Wilfrid Laurier, were now converted to the National Policy, and could no longer be accused of lukewarmness towards the Empire. They showed their devotion to Great Britain by giving her manufactures a preference of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent., and it was largely due to them that the Imperial Penny Post was established.

When the Liberals were in power, the last boundary dispute with the U.S.A. was settled. It will here be convenient to sketch the relations between the two countries since Federation. It has already been mentioned that after the Civil War the Americans entertained a feeling of bitterness towards Canada and Great Britain. Fortunately, the tangible causes of friction were removed by the Washington Treaty of 1871. Of these, two were of special interest to Canada. The question of the ownership of San Juan Island, which was left uncertain in the Oregon Treaty of 1846, was referred to the arbitration of the German Emperor, who awarded the island to America. Secondly, a temporary agreement was reached on the subject of the rights of Americans to fish in Canadian waters, a question which had caused much dispute and ill-feeling since the expiry of the Reciprocity Treaty, and which was again to give trouble after 1885, when the Americans refused to renew the Washington agreement.

There was now only one boundary undefined, that between Canada and Alaska, which the U.S.A. had bought from Russia in 1867. The rough definition of this boundary in the Anglo-Russian treaty of 1825 was enough for all practical purposes until gold was discovered in the Klondyke region in 1896. This district was admittedly Canadian, but the easiest access to it was by way of the coast which was claimed by both countries. In 1903 the dispute was referred to a body of six lawyers (three

American, two Canadian, and one British), who decided in favour of America[1].

At the time of the Washington Treaty many American statesmen suggested that Great Britain should surrender Canada as compensation for the damage done by the *Alabama*, a proposal which was discussed by the English press in the most matter-of-fact way. Macdonald, however, who was one of the three British commissioners at Washington, would have none of it. During the depression of the eighties, some Canadians were tempted to believe that Canada could never prosper unless she became part of the U.S.A. But towards the end of the century circumstances began to alter. As land became dearer and capital more essential in the Western States of America, the stream of emigration turned towards Canada. By the beginning of the present century this tendency was strongly marked: the population of the Dominion rose from 5,371,000 in 1901 to 7,206,000 in 1911.

The increase was most noticeable in the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta[2]. From Lake Winnipeg the country rises to the Rockies in three plateaux, the first of which is the bed of an ancient lake. With the exception of an arid district in the third, all three are remarkable for the richness of their soil, which seems to have been meant by Nature for corn-growing. The population, which was only about 50,000 in 1871, doubled every ten years until the end of the 19th century, and quadrupled in the first fifteen years of the present century. This remarkable development, to which we can as yet assign no limit, stimulated, and was stimulated by, railway construction. Since the beginning of this century two main lines, the Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern, have been built,

[1] The American and Canadian arbitrators voted for their respective countries; but the British arbitrator agreed with the Americans. The award was very unpopular in Canada, which threatened to conduct its own diplomacy in future.

[2] The last two provinces were created in 1905.

apart from branches. At present both these railways are worked at a considerable loss. Not only have they to contend with the competition of the canal system (which was perfected after Federation), but they are far too big for the present needs of the country: with a population of 7,500,000, Canada has some 40,000 miles of railway—nearly as much as Germany. On the other hand, in this, as in many other respects, Canada looks to the future to justify her enterprise. The Canadian Pacific Railway has passed through the lean years and is now a financial success. Even if the other railways never pay their promoters, they will have done good service to the Dominion by opening up the country for settlement.

The centre of gravity of Canada has been steadily moving west. The provinces of the Middle West stand in much the same relation to Ontario as did Upper to Lower Canada a century ago. Their growth has already had important consequences, economic, social, and political. Faced by their competition, the Eastern farmers have grown less cereals and have engaged in dairy farming. The manufacturers of Ontario have found more customers for their goods in the protected home market. On the other hand, there is a disposition on the part of the prairie farmers to criticise the protective system, which raises the cost of their agricultural machinery. Thus there are cross-currents in modern Canadian politics: the representatives of the Western states, who are willing to work with the Ontario representatives as a rule, differ from them on the fiscal question. Further, the recent immigrants into Canada have been drawn from every country of Northern Europe, from the U.S.A., and even from Iceland. By the end of the 19th century Canada had acquired distinctive national characteristics; she has now to assimilate a large number of foreigners, most of whom live in small communities together with those of their own race and language.

In conclusion, a point may be made which has already been hinted at. Many of the Canadians who fought in the Great War left behind them farms which they had only just finished clear-

ing, or on the improvement of which they had spent much time and money. In very few cases were they able to find anyone to look after their property, for their friends were also joining the army. What is true of Canadians as individuals is also true of their country. The history of Canada has been a struggle from the beginning, a struggle for individual existence and a livelihood against a rigorous climate, a struggle for national existence against the attraction of the U.S.A. Capital and labour have been freely spent in the endeavour to people vast solitudes. Just when the outlay was beginning to justify itself, Canada was called upon to postpone the internal development which had cost her much, in order to play her part in the war. Her need had long been men—real men, who could overcome obstacles; but just when there was hope that her need would be satisfied, men were wanted even more urgently in Europe, and Canada gave of her best.

CHAPTER XII

SOUTH AFRICA

The main geographical features of Africa south of the Zambesi are easily sketched. The coast is almost straight, and has few good harbours. Access to the interior is barred by mountains which rise in terraces from the coast or a little way inland. These mountains, which in places reach a height of more than 10,000 feet, form the outer rim of the interior plateau, which rarely falls below 3,000 feet. The winds from the sea are robbed of most of their moisture by the mountain-ranges, and since the rain-bearing wind blows from the south-east, the plateau becomes more arid as one goes west, until it is known as the Kalahari Desert. The dryness of the central table-land has important consequences. It means that there are no great navigable rivers: during the greater part of the year the rivers of South Africa are simply series of pools. It means that vegetation is scanty, that the country is green only in the rainy months, from December to January, and is scorched brown by the sun during the rest of the year. It means, also, that there is no malaria, except where the mountains recede from the coast. This dryness, together with the height above sea-level, makes South Africa "a white man's country", in spite of its latitude. The sun is strong, but sunstroke is almost unknown; the nights are cool; the air is invigorating. The history of South Africa is the story of the gradual exploration and settlement of this plateau and of the healthy coast-strip on the south and south-east, from the Cape as a starting-point.

The Portuguese, who discovered the Cape of Good Hope in 1487, never planted a settlement there. Finding that it furnished no gold or ivory, they regarded it merely as a land-mark

on the way to the East. They, and afterwards the Dutch and English, landed there only to take in fresh water. In 1652 the Dutch East India Company founded a station on the Cape peninsula, so that their ships might be provided with vegetables as a guard against the scurvy. The colony gradually expanded until, by the end of the 18th century, its boundaries were the Buffalo River on the north-west and the Great Fish on the east, while on the north there were farmers, or "Boers", on the Great Karroo.

In 1795 a French army invaded Holland and established a republic, with the result that a British expedition seized Cape Colony in the name of the Stadholder. Restored at the Treaty of Amiens, the Cape was again taken in 1806, and remained British at the Congress of Vienna, compensation being paid to Holland.

British immigrants did not arrive in any numbers until 1820–1, when the Home Government sent out 5,000, of whom 4,000 settled in the Albany district. It seemed at first that the two races would blend as they had done in New York, or that they would at least live in harmony. They came of the same stock, and the religion of both was of the Protestant type. The first Governor was given despotic powers; but the Dutch had never made a fetish of Parliamentary government, and they were allowed to retain their Roman-Dutch law. Difficulties, however, soon began to appear. In 1827–8 English was made the only official language; the Dutch local courts were replaced by resident magistrates; and free natives were given equal rights with white men. This last point was all-important. The native question was the root of most of the troubles which befell South Africa during the following century.

When the Dutch first went to the Cape, they found two types of native, the Bushmen and the Hottentots. The Bushmen, wild little men who had no fixed homes but roamed about the country after game, did not affect the history of South Africa, and have now become extinct. The Hottentots were a little higher

in the scale of civilisation, having reached the pastoral stage. The Dutch reduced many of them to a state of semi-slavery; but their incorrigible laziness and their pilfering habits made them of little use on large farms, and the Dutch took to importing slaves from West Africa and Malay. Towards the end of the 18th century the Dutch came into contact with another race, the Bantu or Kaffirs, who had for some time been moving down the coast, and who had reached the Great Fish River about the same time as the Dutch. The Kaffirs were more civilised than the Hottentots: they knew the use of metals, and their wives engaged in rude agriculture. Of medium height and sturdy physique, fond of war, though not of work, they did not become extinct with the advent of the white man, but continued to multiply. In 1778 some of their chiefs made a treaty with the Dutch, establishing the Great Fish River as the boundary; but the next year they made a cattle-lifting raid beyond the river. The Dutch immediately formed themselves into *commandos*, repelled the raid, carried the war into the enemy's country, and taught the Kaffirs that the game was not worth the candle. These, then, were the elements of the problem: what policy was to be adopted towards the slaves and the tribal Hottentots in the colony, and towards the Kaffirs on its borders? Different answers were given by the Boers, with whom the Governor usually agreed, and by the Home Government, which was influenced by missionaries.

Some missionaries had gone out even during the first British occupation of the Cape, and their numbers were increased after it definitely became a British colony. For the most part they worked quietly among the natives, not only preaching Christianity but teaching them crafts and trying to make them industrious. Some of the missionaries, however, wrote books and pamphlets in which they accused the Boers of habitual cruelty towards the natives. Though they may have laid the faults of individuals at the door of all, it is impossible not to believe that there was much truth in these accusations. The scarcity of pasture meant that the Boers lived on large cattle farms, isolated from each

other and from the outer world. They were still in the 17th century, when white men had little consideration for the rights of natives. They knew nothing of the humanitarian movement in England, which was at the back of missionary enterprise. To them such accusations, even if true, were frivolous, and showed an ignorance of the proper way of dealing with natives. Their disgust was increased when slavery was abolished, and they received only £1,250,000 as compensation for slaves which special commissioners had valued at £3,000,000 (1834). Thus the first question was settled in a manner which displeased the Boers; the second soon came up for consideration.

Two Kaffir wars had already been fought by the British, after the second of which all the country between the Great Fish and the Keiskama was declared neutral. In December 1834 twelve thousand Kaffirs of the Kosa tribe burst into the colony without any warning, plundering, burning farms, and murdering the inhabitants. Hastily collecting a force, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, the Governor, expelled the invaders and conquered and annexed their country, thus extending the British frontier to the Kei. Under British rule the Kosas would act as a buffer, he thought, and would prevent the Kaffirs farther east from invading the colony. His action was applauded by all the colonists, and, had it been allowed to stand, the whole history of South Africa might have been different. Lord Glenelg, however, who was Colonial Secretary, refused to take the advice of the responsible official on the spot. Allowing himself to be persuaded that the Kaffirs were the victims of injustice, and that a binding treaty could be made with them, he disallowed the annexation, forbade British subjects to enter the Kaffir country, and recalled D'Urban.

The consequences of this reversal of policy were mischievous in the extreme. The Kaffirs had been beaten, and punished, and now found their punishment cancelled. Such action they interpreted, not as clemency, but as weakness. Glenelg had prevented D'Urban from doing the work well, and it had to be

done over and over again, without the aid of men who, whatever their faults, were experts in frontier wars.

For the Great Trek now began (1836). The Boers of the out-lying districts would have become restive under any government which made its power felt. In the days of the Company they had been left largely to their own resources, and their natural love of freedom had developed into a distaste for all restraint, however necessary for the public good. Their patience was now exhausted with a government which deprived them of their property, refused them security against the attacks of savages, and forbade them to organise their own defence. In the first two years alone between six and ten thousand Boers sold their farms for what they would fetch, and left the colony. They took their wives and families in their big wagons, drawn by a dozen yoke of oxen, and they travelled in small parties, since grazing was thin. At first they went north (for the Kosas were to the east), to the country between the Orange and the Limpopo. Here they were attacked by the Matabele, whom they expelled. Then some three hundred of them went east and crossed the Drakenberg into Natal, where they were well received by the Zulu king, Dingaan.

At the beginning of the 19th century the Zulus were a small and insignificant Kaffir tribe. Tchaka, who became their chief in 1810, improved their discipline, tactics and weapons to such an extent as to give them the victory over all their neighbours, whom, in Kaffir fashion, they slew or drove out of their homes. In 1817 a Zulu tribe called the Matabele quarrelled with Tchaka, and occupied the country from which they were afterwards expelled by the Boers. In 1828 Tchaka was murdered by his half-brother Dingaan, who succeeded him. In the first thirty years of the 19th century the Zulus and Matabele are estimated to have killed more than a million people.

The first Boers who made their way into Natal must have thought that at last they had reached the Promised Land. After their wanderings over the parched and dusty veldt they found

themselves in a country which was green and well-watered. More than that, it was empty of inhabitants, as no Kaffirs had dared to return since Tchaka had laid it waste in 1820. Dingaan, as has been said, received the Boers with fair words, and then murdered them, men, women, and children (1838). This was not only a crime but a serious error, for it brought down upon him more Boers from the interior. The Zulus trusted to the close formation which had proved so effective against their native enemies; but the Boers fired at long range, galloped off to reload, and then repeated the process. Dingaan was assassinated, and his brother Panda, who succeeded him, was confined to Zululand as a vassal of the Boers. Natal itself was organised as a Boer Republic.

In 1824 some British traders had gone to Port Natal (Durban); but the Home Government had refused to accept any responsibility for the country. It was now roused to action by the Governor of the Cape, who pointed out that an independent Boer Republic on the coast would be able to communicate with other countries, and that international complications might follow. Accordingly in 1843 Natal was occupied by British troops, and was placed under the Governor of Cape Colony[1].

This step was bitterly resented by the Boers, who felt that, since they had done the work of breaking the Zulu power, they should have been allowed to keep the fruits of victory. Rather than submit once more to British rule, they abandoned their new farms and went to join their brethren on the veldt. In 1852 Great Britain gave up the attempt to treat them as revolted subjects, and recognised the independence of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State.

The economic life of South Africa was soon to be affected by two important events.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 meant that the Cape was no longer the half-way house to India. But for a long time it had been considerably more than that, and it was

[1] In 1856 it was given a separate administration.

now a port of call for vessels on their way to Australia. In 1867 diamonds were found near the Orange River, and in 1870 the Kimberley mines were opened. In the following year the district was annexed as Griqualand West by the British Government. The economic, social and political results of these discoveries are hard to exaggerate. "The digger, the capitalist, the company promoter, jostled the slow-moving Dutch farmer and quickened the pace of life." In order to understand the complicated period which followed we must examine the three main factors—Lord Carnarvon's scheme of confederation, the revival of the Zulu military power, and the anarchic condition of the Transvaal.

In the late fifties a movement in favour of confederation which grew up in Cape Colony and the Orange Free State received no support from the Home Government. Lord Carnarvon, who returned to the Colonial Office in 1874, had been responsible for the passage through Parliament of the Act which established the Dominion of Canada, and was anxious that a similar confederation should be formed in South Africa. In 1877 he sent out Sir Bartle Frere as Governor of Cape Colony[1] and High Commissioner, to promote this policy.

On his arrival, Frere learnt that the people of Natal were alarmed at the warlike attitude of the Zulu king, Cetewayo, who had succeeded his father, Panda, in 1872. Cetewayo had revived Tchaka's regimental system, forbidding his young men to marry until they had "washed their spears" in the blood of an enemy. He had hitherto maintained friendly relations with the British, but he now talked openly of a great war between whites and blacks. The existence on its frontiers of a well-disciplined force commanded by a blood thirsty despot was a menace to the security of Natal, whose population at this time consisted of 25,000 white men and 300,000 natives.

As we have seen, the Transvaal was inhabited by those Boers who were irreconcilable opponents of British rule.

[1] Cape Colony had been given responsible government in 1872.

Their passion for freedom had reached such a pitch that they found it difficult to unite even for self-government: it was not until 1864, and then only after civil war, that a single President was recognised. Their rooted objection to the payment of taxes left the Exchequer empty and reduced the paper money to one-quarter of its face value. In 1876 they were badly beaten by the Kaffirs to the north-east; so they left the war to be carried on by filibusters, broken men of all nations who had been attracted to the Transvaal by its absence of law and order. Cetewayo, who was anxious to fight them, had hitherto been restrained by the Governor of Natal, but it was doubtful how much longer he would consent to stay his hand. Altogether, the condition of the Transvaal was a source of anxiety to the whole white population of South Africa, and could not be ignored by Great Britain, who, as paramount power, was peculiarly interested in the relations between white and black. Carnarvon accordingly sent Sir Theophilus Shepstone, who thoroughly understood the Boers, on a special mission to examine the condition of the Transvaal and, if he thought necessary, to annex it. After studying the situation for three months, Shepstone became convinced that annexation was the only possible remedy, and on April 12th, 1877, he declared the Transvaal to be British territory, promising it a separate administration, its own laws, and the "fullest legislative privileges compatible with the circumstances of the country and the intelligence of its people." Sir Bartle Frere had landed less than a fortnight before, and was in no way responsible for this step.

The annexation of the Transvaal enraged Cetewayo, who considered himself deprived of his lawful prey. Frere became convinced that the present state of suspense was intolerable, and that it was necessary, by persuasion or force, to dissolve the Zulu military system. In December 1878 he sent Cetewayo an ultimatum, bidding him disband his regiments, allow his soldiers to marry, and accept a British resident. As these

demands were ignored, British and colonial troops invaded Zululand. The disaster of Isandhlwana (January 22nd, 1879) and the gallant defence of Rorke's Drift were followed by the decisive victory of Ulundi (July 4th). Zulu militarism was shattered, and, after various experiments, the country was annexed (1887).

In the Transvaal, though a minority was strongly opposed to the annexation, most of the Boers were not unwilling to be defended from their native enemies by British arms. As time went on, however, discontent began to appear. No attempt was made to redeem the promise of free institutions. Shepstone was succeeded by officials who had no knowledge of the country and no sympathy with its inhabitants. The defeat of Cetewayo and of the Kaffirs to the north-east removed the only reason which had induced the Boers to acquiesce in the loss of their independence. Their petitions for the restoration of their freedom met with the answer, from officials in South Africa and ministers in England, that the annexation must be considered irrevocable; but their past experience made them refuse to accept as final any decision of a British cabinet. The general election of April 1880 led to the return to office of Gladstone, who, in his Midlothian campaign, had strongly condemned the annexation of the Transvaal. On learning this news the Boers naturally ceased to agitate, confident that Gladstone would be as good as his word. Gladstone, however, was told by the officials on the spot that it would be unwise to give the Boers self-government before the confederation scheme had been carried, and that their more orderly conduct showed that they were becoming reconciled to the situation. The Boers, on the other hand, were determined that self-government should come first, and they persuaded the Dutch members of the Cape Parliament to shelve the confederation bill. Finally, after waiting for eight months for Gladstone to redeem his promise, they took the law into their own hands. In December 1880 the whole country blazed up in revolt, the small British garrisons were invested,

and in January 1881 the main Boer army under Joubert invaded the north-west corner of Natal to prevent their relief.

Sir George Colley, the British general, could only collect 1,200 men against Joubert, whom he found strongly posted at Laing's Nek, a narrow pass through which ran the road into the Transvaal. Here he was twice repulsed. Then, without waiting for the reinforcements which were coming up (for the Transvaal garrisons could not stand a long siege), on the night of Saturday, February 26th, he led some four hundred men up Majuba Hill, which dominated Joubert's position. His men did not reach the summit until 4 a.m., and they were exhausted by their long climb. Before dawn the Boers began the ascent, taking cover with such skill that they were within range some hours before Colley discovered their approach. After pouring a heavy fire on the British, who were exposed against the sky-line, they rushed the top shortly after mid-day, and soon drove the survivors in confusion down the other side. Colley and 90 of his men were killed in this action, and before his successor could make another attempt to dislodge Joubert, Gladstone accepted Kruger's proposal that the whole dispute should be referred to a Commission appointed entirely by the Crown. In August a convention was concluded at Pretoria by which the Transvaal was given its independence under the Queen's suzerainty, subject to the condition that it was to have no dealings with any other foreign power except the Orange Free State. When the convention was revised in 1884 the reference to the Queen's suzerainty was omitted.

Gladstone's action in making peace after Majuba has been much criticised. On the one hand, racial jealousy in South Africa had been embittered by the annexation of the Transvaal, and a prolongation of hostilities might easily have resulted in a general conflict between English and Dutch. On the other hand, it was ignominious for a British Government to concede to force what it had long refused to argument. The Boers were convinced that their independence was the direct result of

Majuba, and they were confirmed in their belief that no British government could maintain a consistent policy. Their elation was the measure of the gloom and despair of the British colonists throughout South Africa, who held that before the Boers were given their freedom a demonstration in force should have been made in their country, to show them that Great Britain had it in her power to withhold the boon she granted. The fact is, the failure of the Liberal cabinet to practise what they preached had placed them on the horns of a dilemma: the only possible alternatives were bad; their apologists could only plead that they did not choose the worst.

On regaining their freedom the Boers resumed their roving habits, and began to trek into the country around the Transvaal, obtaining grants of land from chiefs as the price of their aid in battle. Hostile critics said that if they found the natives at peace, they did not scruple to foment discord among them, and that, under the pretence of adopting orphan children, they were reviving slavery. Great Britain could not allow them to stir up native unrest in this fashion, and determined to confine them within fixed boundaries. At this time their only frontier was the Vaal on the south. In 1885 Great Britain drove out the Boers and filibusters who were disturbing the peace of Bechuanaland, annexed the country south of the Molopo as British Bechuanaland (which was handed over to Cape Colony in 1895), and established a protectorate over the rest as far as the 22nd parallel. In 1887 the British annexation of Zululand barred the expansion of the Transvaal to the east.

One of the motives for making Bechuanaland British was the desire to prevent the Boers from joining hands with the Germans, who had just proclaimed a protectorate over Damaraland and Namaqualand[1], and had thus begun the "scramble for Africa". Up to the middle of the 19th century practically nothing was known about the interior of the "Dark Continent". Even as

[1] Except Walfish Bay, which the foresight of Sir Bartle Frere had secured for Great Britain in 1878.

late as 1870 the dependencies of European powers, except in the extreme south, were narrow strips on the coast. In the interval Livingstone (d. 1873) had spent almost the whole of his time exploring the Zambesi valley and the central lakes. His work and that of his successors showed that Central Africa might become a valuable field of trading enterprise. Hitherto Germany had not been a colonial power because, until her unification was complete, her energies were divided. Entering the field late, she found all the best portions of the earth already in the possession of other powers; but she determined to get what she could in Africa. Her example was followed by other countries, among them Great Britain, and by 1891 virtually the whole of Africa was amicably partitioned.

It is interesting to note that Great Britain reverted to the 17th century practice of using chartered companies as the instruments of government. When she annexed the country at the mouths of the Niger and Oil rivers (after the German annexation of Togoland and the Cameroons in 1884) she handed over its administration to the Royal Niger Company, which sold its rights to the Crown in 1900. The foundation of the German East Africa Company in 1885 was followed by that of the Imperial British East Africa Company. When the latter Company surrendered its charter in 1895, the territories it had administered were formed into the protectorates of British East Africa, Uganda, and Zanzibar. More important than either of these companies was Cecil Rhodes's creation, the British South Africa Company.

Cecil Rhodes went out to South Africa in 1871 for the sake of his health, joined in the rush to Kimberley, and in 1885 formed the De Beers Consolidated Mining Company, a combine which included practically all the mines, and restricted the output in order to maintain the price. In 1884 he entered Cape politics. The Dutch of Cape Colony had just formed the Afrikander Bond, which aimed at the union of the two British colonies and the two Boer republics into a single state, under

British suzerainty, but with equal rights for both races. Rhodes sympathised with this scheme, which he regarded as part of a larger one—the construction of a Cape to Cairo railway which should run entirely through British territory. He was anxious lest Germany should gain access to the Transvaal and Portuguese East Africa around the north of British Bechuanaland, and thus prevent British expansion. He therefore determined that Matabeleland and Mashonaland should become British, and in 1889 he secured a charter which gave his newly-formed British South Africa Company sovereign rights north of the Limpopo. The northern limits of its powers were not specified, and he extended its sphere of operations as far as German East Africa.

When Rhodesia was still in its infancy, its founder became Prime Minister of Cape Colony (1890). There he was supported by English and Dutch alike in his plan of bringing about a voluntary confederation of South Africa. The Orange Free State, where the two races lived together in perfect harmony, was well-disposed towards the scheme, and concluded a customs union with Cape Colony. President Kruger, however, annoyed with the policy which had hemmed in the Transvaal on all sides, was determined not to surrender a particle of his country's independence.

Conditions in the Transvaal had altered greatly during the last few years. Gold-mining on a small scale had been carried on since 1867; but in 1885 the "banket" beds of the Witwatersrand were discovered. Their characteristic feature is not so much their richness as their consistency: they contain much the same proportion of gold at a depth of 2,000 feet as on the surface; gold-mining on the Rand is not more speculative than most other industries. Johannesburg was founded in 1886, and in ten years had a population of over 100,000. The Boers resented the intrusion of these Uitlanders—outsiders—upon their solitude. Deeply religious in their narrow way, and obscurantist in their hatred of change, they disliked both the good and the bad qualities of the new-comers—their modern

standards of civilisation as well as their thirst for wealth. After the recent British annexations they could no longer trek into the interior, so they determined to remain masters in their own country. The franchise, which had previously been easy to acquire, was restricted in 1890 to men over forty who had spent twelve years in the Transvaal after taking the oath of allegiance. This, of course, excluded the typical Uitlander, who wished to make his fortune in as short a time as possible, and then return home to spend it.

The mining industry was hampered by the Government in every direction. A monopoly of the dynamite used in blasting the quartz was given to a company which raised its price 40 per cent. The crushing-machinery, which was all imported, had to pay heavy customs dues on entering the Transvaal. The price of the coal used to work the engines was doubled by the heavy freights charged by the Netherlands Railway Company. Heavy duties were imposed on the mealies on which the native workmen lived, and on all other foodstuffs. The money thus raised was not spent on public works; Johannesburg was unprovided with a water supply or drainage system, with the result that its death-rate was very high.

In 1892 the British residents of Johannesburg (who formed seven-tenths of its white population) founded the National Union in order to secure the franchise and to place English on an equal footing with Dutch, which was the official language and the only medium of instruction in schools. Finding that all their petitions remained unheeded, they at last determined to gain their ends by means of an armed rising. At this juncture Cecil Rhodes, who had organised a strong mining syndicate, and whose influence on the Rand was very great, offered the help of the British South Africa Company's mounted police. At the last moment he was forced to postpone the rising, as the non-British Uitlanders objected to the hoisting of the Union Jack, wishing to establish an international republic. Dr Jameson, however, the administrator of Rhodesia, adhered to the

original plan, and invaded the Transvaal with 600 troopers on December 29th, 1895. He found his way to Johannesburg barred by a Boer commando, and on January 2nd, 1896, he was forced, after blood had been shed, to surrender. Jameson and the other ring-leaders were handed over to the British Government, by whom they were imprisoned. Rhodes resigned the premiership of Cape Colony and the directorate of the Company, and was severely censured by the Parliamentary committee of enquiry.

The reckless action of Dr Jameson made a peaceful solution more difficult than ever. The Boers, knowing that the Premier of a British colony had been its prime mover, refused to believe that the Colonial Office was not at least cognisant of it, and were confirmed in their suspicion that Great Britain wished to round off her South African territories by annexing their country. They accordingly thought it useless to attempt to conciliate the Uitlanders, whom they treated worse than ever, and began to arm for a struggle which they considered inevitable. The raid also increased race feeling in South African politics, alienating the Orange Free State, which had previously been friendly to Great Britain, and reviving old jealousies between English and Dutch in Cape Colony.

In March 1899 the British Uitlanders re-opened the question by sending the Queen a petition in which they enumerated their wrongs. Public opinion in Great Britain and the Colonies was deeply stirred by the spectacle of Englishmen being treated as a subject race. Great Britain undoubtedly had the right to ask the Transvaal Government to redress particular grievances of British subjects; but Chamberlain thought it simpler to attack the problem through the franchise, since, once the Uitlanders obtained the vote, they could find their own remedies. Accordingly Sir Alfred Milner met President Kruger in June at Bloemfontein, and demanded that the qualification for the franchise should be reduced to five years' residence. This opened a controversy which was only ended on

October 9th, when President Kruger despatched an ultimatum warning Great Britain to stop sending reinforcements to South Africa if she wished to avoid war.

There can be little doubt that neither side really wished for war, and that neither understood the magnitude of the task before it. In pressing for an easier franchise the British Government had taken up a false position. Its suzerainty, if it still existed, gave it the right to control the foreign relations, but not the internal affairs, of the Transvaal. On a purely domestic matter like the franchise it could only offer its advice, the rejection of which would not constitute a proper *casus belli.* Even advice should not have been offered until the suspicion aroused by the Jameson Raid had had time to die down. Further, though it was true that the Uitlanders had no political rights, their lives and property were safe, and they could look forward to the peaceful and constitutional removal of their grievances. For the system which Kruger represented was already doomed: he was an old man and must soon be replaced by younger men who were more in touch with the modern world. The state of public feeling, however, made it difficult for the Cabinet to trust to the slow handiwork of time. Nor did they seriously contemplate the possibility of armed resistance on the part of the Boers. The Intelligence Department estimated that the Transvaal could put 32,000 men in the field, and the Orange Free State 22,000, and took it for granted that these militiamen would not be able to stand against regular troops. The Boers could surely not challenge us to such a one-sided contest. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Chamberlain used the threat of war as a diplomatic weapon, in much the same way as Napoleon had done towards England when she objected to his breach of the Treaty of Amiens. Like Napoleon, he thought he could frighten his opponents, and like Napoleon he was mistaken in his estimate of their character.

The Boers were not the men to yield to threats. The

natural self-reliance of their race had been intensified by their history and their surroundings. They had faced difficulties and dangers, and had surmounted them. The austere scenery of their country—the lonely veldt, with its hard, clear outlines and its rugged granite kopjes—had become part of their being. They liked to live alone with their families, at a distance even from their friends. This isolation prevented the growth of the tolerance and mutual concession which are found in more compact communities. The Boers clung stubbornly to their own views and would admit of no compromise. Nor did they regard their chances as hopeless. On their hunting expeditions they had learnt how to take cover from the keen-eyed beasts of the veldt and how to shoot them at a distance, in spite of their protective colouring. Laing's Nek and Majuba had shown them that in their own country they were more than a match for British troops. Since then they had provided themselves with artillery, in which, since they had never before seen modern guns, they placed unbounded confidence. They reckoned on the help at which the Kaiser had hinted in his telegram to their President, and they remembered the vacillation which had always characterised the dealings of the British Government with them in the past. Living as they did in an inland country, they did not understand that British sea-power would prevent the intervention of Germany, and they had but a faint conception of the resources of the British Empire. More important still, they did not understand that for once Great Britain was in earnest.

Since the Cabinet was slow to realise that the Boers were not afraid to fight, the outbreak of war found comparatively few British troops in South Africa. The Boers were thus enabled to take the offensive, sending one army to invade Natal and another to invade Cape Colony, while detachments from the latter laid siege to Kimberley and Mafeking. Sir George White, who commanded in Natal, was forced to retire on Ladysmith, where he was besieged by the Boers.

At the beginning of November, 1899, Sir Redvers Buller arrived at Cape Town to assume the chief command. He divided his forces, sending Lord Methuen to relieve Kimberley, and Gatacre to repulse the invasion of Cape Colony in the centre, while he himself advanced to the relief of Ladysmith. In one "black week" in December all three forces were defeated, Methuen losing 700 men in a night attack at Magersfontein, Gatacre surrendering 600 prisoners at Stormberg, and Buller sacrificing ten guns and over a thousand men killed and wounded in a vain attempt to force the passage of the Tugela.

The British Government, realising the gravity of the situation, sent out Lord Roberts as Commander-in-Chief, with Lord Kitchener as his Chief of Staff. These appointments would in themselves have revived public confidence; but the reserves were called out, regular troops on garrison duty were relieved by Volunteers, young men accustomed to riding were enlisted as yeomanry, and troops from the Dominions came forward in great numbers.

On January 10th, 1900, Roberts and Kitchener landed at Cape Town, and the second stage of the war began. Leaving Buller to continue his efforts to relieve Ladysmith, Roberts concentrated his forces against the Boers in the west. French was despatched with 5,000 cavalry to relieve Kimberley, which he did on February 15th. With his main army Roberts drove Cronje from his position at Magersfontein by turning his flank—he knew better than to attempt to storm trenches by a frontal attack—and finally made him surrender at Paardeberg with over 4,000 men (Feb. 27th). These successes relieved the pressure on Ladysmith, where Sir George White was holding out gallantly in spite of famine and disease. Buller had made two more costly attacks which had ended in failure; but at the end of February the Boers, finding their communications threatened by the advance of the main British army, broke up the siege. Crushing all opposition on his way, Roberts entered Bloemfontein in March, and Pretoria in June. The Orange

Free State and the Transvaal were annexed to Great Britain, and the war seemed over. In reality, it was only entering on its longest and most trying phase.

Destroying their big guns, the Boers maintained a guerrilla warfare for nearly two years[1]. Their knowledge of the country, which was too large to be kept down by force, their mobility, their lack of uniform, and the "slimness" of their leaders made them very difficult to cope with. If the British troops were dispersed, the Boers suddenly attacked a small detachment in overwhelming force; if they were concentrated, the Boers split up into small bands which cut the railways. In December 1900 Lord Roberts returned to England, leaving Lord Kitchener in command. Kitchener set about his task in his usual methodical fashion. In one area after another he organised "drives" which brought in a steady flow of prisoners and war material. He deprived the Boers of the shelter of the farm-houses by collecting their women and children in concentration camps. He protected his lines of communication and narrowed the area in which the guerrillas could work by constructing a maze of loop-holed blockhouses, 600 yards apart, connected with each other by lanes of strong barbed wire. At last the Boers, realising that his spirit was as stubborn as their own, and disappointed in their hope of foreign intervention, bowed to the inevitable. In May 1902 delegates from the commandos met the Boer military and political leaders at Vereeniging to discuss the British terms, and on May 31st the treaty of peace was signed. The Boers became British subjects; they were given £3,000,000 to rebuild their farms; they were promised self-government as soon as possible; and the Dutch and English languages were both to be used in the schools and law-courts.

Self-government was granted to the Transvaal in 1906 and to the Orange Free State in 1907. At first it seemed that the forces of disruption had been increased, or at least set free;

[1] General Botha had just been made Commander-in-Chief, on the death of Joubert.

for the Transvaal announced her intention of withdrawing from the customs union to which she had been committed by Lord Milner. The fiscal interests of the different colonies seemed to clash with one another. The high import duties which Cape Colony and Natal[1] desired for the sake of revenue increased the already high cost of living in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony. The state railways presented similar difficulties. Cape Colony, Natal, and the Orange Free State[2] wished for as large a share as possible of the trade of the Rand; but the railway from Johannesburg to Delagoa Bay was far shorter than those to Durban, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town, and more of it lay within, and was owned by, the Transvaal.

A Conference which met at Pretoria in May 1908 to consider the customs problem found that the conflicting interests could not be harmonised under the existing political system, and passed a resolution in favour of a Convention to discuss the union of the four colonies. Since the war, the feeling had been gaining ground that South Africa should have a single government to deal with its problems. It was, after all, one country geographically, and its political divisions were the result of its unhappy history.

The Convention which had been suggested by the Pretoria Conference met at Durban in October 1908, finished its draft constitution at Cape Town, and considered the amendments of the various Parliaments at Bloemfontein. The matters it had to discuss were of so delicate a nature that its meetings were held in secret. Such was the tact and forbearance of its members that full agreement was reached, and the constitution of the Union of South Africa became law in September 1909.

The framers of the constitution were so impressed with the evils which had resulted from division in the past that they created a unitary, not a federal, state. The four existing colonies became provinces of the Union, exercising certain powers as

[1] Natal had received responsible government in 1895.

[2] Which was now allowed to resume its former name.

the agents or delegates of the Union Government. The Provincial Councils of South Africa are more like the County Councils of Great Britain than the State Parliaments of Australia or the Provincial Parliaments of Canada. The reason for this difference, as has been said above, is historical: Australia might take precautions to prevent the central government from becoming too strong; but Australia had had no civil wars. South Africa wanted to make sure of having a strong central government for the first time in her history.

To some people, especially in the German Empire, it must have seemed strange that, a dozen years after the Peace of Vereeniging, Boers were voluntarily fighting side by side with Britons against a common foe. The explanation is to be found in the constitutional history of the intervening years, which has just been sketched. There were those who thought that, in allowing the Boers to govern themselves four years after the conclusion of a long and desperate contest, Campbell-Bannerman was allowing theories to count for more than hard facts. Events have proved his statesmanship to have been equal to his courage. The success of his policy is the best commentary on Gladstone's failure, for it was followed by a closer union than Carnarvon had hoped for, a union which could not have been accomplished if the colonists, British and Boer alike, had not been determined to bury the memories of old quarrels and to make a fresh start.

CHAPTER XIII

AUSTRALIA

Australia became British by settlement, not conquest, so that its history has been free from the jealousy between two European races which has done much to hinder the progress of Canada and South Africa. Unlike Canada, it has had no great civilised state on its borders, but has been free to develop on its own lines. Unlike South Africa, it has never had a serious native problem, for its aboriginal inhabitants were too timid and uncivilised to be dangerous even to the first settlers. Its history, being one of economic development, of social and political experiments, is modern in spirit.

It must not be thought that because Australian history has been remarkably free from troubles of human manufacture, it has therefore been a story of corrupting ease: Nature has supplied quite enough obstacles to prevent the national character from becoming enervated. The compact shape of the continent has all-important consequences. The winds from the sea are deprived of most of their rain by the mountains which rise from the coasts, particularly on the east. Nearly a third of the continent, in a latitude corresponding to that of Egypt, has an average annual rainfall of less than 10 inches, while there are no snow-clad mountains in the interior to give rise to a Nile.

Australia was first discovered by Europeans in 1606, when Torres, a Spaniard, sailed through the Strait which bears his name, and a Dutch ship coasted along the shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria. During the next generation Dutchmen sailed along the west coast, but no serious attempt at exploration was made until 1642, when van Diemen, the Governor of Java,

sent Tasman to find out what he could about the new land. Tasman explored much of the coast of Australia (which he called New Holland), and discovered Van Diemen's Land and New Zealand. The early voyages, however, have little to do with the history of Australia. The Dutch had just established themselves in the Spice Islands, which were making them the richest nation in Europe, and they were content to leave to others the barren and inhospitable shores they had found. The first Englishman to visit New Holland was Dampier (1686 and 1699), who also gave his countrymen an unfavourable report.

Australian history really begins with the voyage of Captain Cook. In 1768 George III lent to the Royal Society the *Endeavour* (320 tons, Captain James Cook) to enable a party of its members to observe the transit of Venus at Tahiti. After the observations had been taken Captain Cook sailed, in accordance with his orders, to New Zealand and thence to New Holland. He landed at Botany Bay, explored the coast to the north, and took possession of the country in the name of his sovereign (1773).

This claim would probably not have been made effective but for the outbreak of the War of American Independence. Great Britain had been accustomed to transport criminals to her American colonies, and after their loss the Home Secretary, who was responsible for our few remaining colonies, was persuaded to use Botany Bay as a convict settlement. In taking this step he was acting in his capacity as Home Secretary, and was thinking simply of the interests of Great Britain, which he wished to rid of undesirable citizens. The real originators of the scheme were thinking of the development of Australia. Since, for the time, the American Revolt had damped colonial enthusiasm they saw in this the only method of providing Australia with settlers. It must be remembered that in those days men were convicted and transported for crimes which the law no longer regards as offences at all. In any case, a first

offender would stand a better chance of reformation by doing useful work in a new country than by being confined in a pestilential hulk at home.

The first batch of convicts was sent out in 1787 and reached Botany Bay on January 18th, 1788. Captain Phillip, the Governor, did not consider it a suitable spot, and went on to the splendid harbour of Port Jackson, where he chose Sydney Cove for the settlement. In spite of the high death-rate among the convicts, both on the voyage out and afterwards, the government considered the experiment a success. The composition of the settlement, its distance from Great Britain, and the economic conditions which prevail in all new colonies combined to make progress slow during the first quarter of a century. There was, however, the promise of a great future. It was found that cattle throve and that some of the land was suitable for wheat. More important still, Captain Macarthur, one of the garrison officers, insisted, in spite of opposition and ridicule, that sheep would do well. He imported Bengal and Irish sheep, and was even able to procure some pure Spanish merinos. Thanks to his confidence sheep-farming soon became the staple industry of the country. At this time the expansion of the English woollen industry, consequent on the new inventions, was hampered by the difficulty of finding new sources of raw material. Thus Macarthur found no difficulty in persuading capitalists that Australia could supply the demand for more wool. The need of fresh pastures acted as a stimulus to explorers.

In 1813 Wentworth and two companions made their way up the steep eastern face of the Blue Mountains, which had hitherto been considered impassable, and found themselves on a plateau which sloped gently westwards. On the upper Macquarie they discovered excellent pasture for sheep, a road was built, the town of Bathurst was founded, and free immigrants began to arrive in larger numbers. In the next quarter of a century the Murray River system was explored. It was found

that when the rivers reached the central plain they became brackish and feeble, and even disappeared altogether. Much of the high ground, however, between the eastern range and the plain was well-watered and fertile. In 1828 Cunningham found a gap through the mountains west of Brisbane which led to the Darling Downs, and in 1836 Mitchell discovered the rich district of "Australia Felix" in what is now Victoria.

While squatters were following these explorers by land from Sydney, fresh centres were being created on the coast. In 1804 and 1825 additional convict settlements were established at Hobart and Brisbane respectively; in 1829 the Swan River settlement, in 1835 Melbourne, and in 1836 Adelaide were founded. Thus, within half a century of the original settlement at Sydney, the foundations of the six Australian States had been laid. Of these, Western and South Australia were independent from the beginning; Van Diemen's Land was made independent of New South Wales in 1825; and Melbourne and Brisbane were still part of the parent colony.

Though Sydney had been chosen by a naval captain on account of its harbour, it had proved, as the key to the Darling, to possess equal advantages from the standpoint of the land. The future of the other colonies, however, seemed less promising. The explorers of the forties had evil tidings to report. In 1840 Eyre went north from Adelaide to the "dead heart of Australia", a barren district of mud lakes encrusted with salt. Turning aside in disgust, he made his way to Perth through the dreary desert which extends along the shores of the Great Australian Bight. In 1844 Sturt explored the parody of a river system which occasionally trickles into Lake Eyre. In 1844–5 Leichardt and in 1845 Mitchell and Kennedy brought back better news of North and West Queensland. But in 1848 Kennedy and nine of his twelve companions perished on their way to Cape York, and Leichardt's expedition to Western Australia was swallowed up in the interior. The disappointment caused by these failures was soon for-

gotten in the excitement which attended the first discoveries of gold.

The discovery of gold in small quantities during the forties had induced the Home Government to send out a geologist. In 1851 an Australian who had returned from the Californian rush of 1848 visited a tributary of the Macquarie where the rocks resembled those he had seen in the Californian gold-fields, and there discovered alluvial gold. He at once informed the New South Wales government, which rewarded him and issued licences to diggers at a fee of 30*s.* a month. Shortly afterwards a doctor found a single nugget which weighed more than a hundred pounds. The news spread like wild-fire, and many inhabitants of the other colonies rushed to the Bathurst diggings, while others looked for gold at home. It was found to a greater or less extent in most of the colonies, but by far the richest discoveries were made in Victoria. Men flocked to the diggings, not only from the pastoral districts of Australia and Tasmania, but from almost every country of the world[1]. The ships which brought the immigrants were deserted by their crews; the police who were sent to keep order in the gold-fields turned diggers themselves. For no previous experience was necessary: one had simply to dig a hole, wash the sand and gold, and pass it through a sieve—everything depended on one's luck. Mining-towns sprang up as if by magic, their streets composed of huts and booths. Fortunes were made not only by diggers but by keepers of stores, drinking-saloons, and gambling-dens.

The position of the Governor of Victoria was difficult in the extreme. Deserted by almost all his police and subordinate officials, he was expected to keep in order a motley population rendered half mad by the lust for gold. Even when he received a regiment and a man-of-war from England and convict guards from Tasmania, his difficulties were not at an end. The Ballarat miners demanded the franchise and the abolition of the fee charged for the licence, and some of the extremists among them

[1] The population of Victoria rose from 76,000 in 1850 to 397,000 in 1856.

proceeded to entrench themselves behind the Eureka Stockade. Their defences were stormed in a night attack by troops, marines, and police (Dec. 3rd, 1854), and martial law was proclaimed, though only for a week. Then the government removed the grievances of the diggers by giving them the vote and allowing them to take out a Miner's Right for £1 a year (March 1855).

By this time the nugget beds were exhausted, and recourse was had to expensive machinery to crush gold-bearing rocks. Capitalists took the place of the diggers, most of whom became small farmers, stockmen, or artisans in the towns. Besides providing Australia with voluntary immigrants, the gold rush hastened the advent of responsible government.

The first settlement at Sydney had consisted of just over a thousand persons, of whom more than 800 were convicts, while the remainder were troops and officials who were under the absolute control of the Governor. The first three Governors were naval captains, who insisted on man-of-war discipline. In the twenties the authority of the Governor was limited by the establishment of a Council which contained non-official members. As free settlers became a more important element of the population, they began to protest against the system of transportation, which had now outlived its purpose. Their complaints were supported by a strong body of feeling at home, and in 1840 the mainland of Australia ceased to be used as a settlement for convicts, who were thenceforward to be sent only to Van Diemen's Land and Norfolk Island.

It was now possible to give New South Wales representative government (1842). In response to the repeated petitions of the inhabitants of Melbourne, Parliament passed an act in 1850 which made Victoria a separate colony with a constitution of the type which New South Wales had received in 1842. The act gave similar constitutions to South Australia and Van Diemen's Land, and gave powers to the Legislative Council of each of the four colonies to alter its constitution as it thought necessary. The way was thus made easy for the establishment of responsible

government when circumstances should demand it. Western Australia had experienced such difficulty in attracting free immigrants that it had recently applied to the Home Government for convicts, who were readily supplied. This meant that representative government could not yet be bestowed. On the other hand, the request of Van Diemen's Land that it should no longer be used as a penal settlement was now granted, and to celebrate its start in life as a free colony it changed its name to Tasmania.

The influx of gold-seekers, most of whom came from Great Britain or other colonies where they had enjoyed full political rights, made self-government inevitable. In 1854 the four colonies which enjoyed representative government used their powers of amending their constitutions so as to make the executive responsible to the legislature, and in 1855 the British Parliament passed bills confirming their action. In each colony a Parliament was established consisting of two Chambers. In New South Wales the members of the Legislative Council were appointed for life by the Governor (i.e. by the ministry); in South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria they were elected for a term of years, a property qualification being fixed for candidates and electors alike. The Assembly in each colony was popularly elected on a wide franchise, and had the sole right of initiating money bills. South Australia gave all adult males the vote from the first, and introduced the ballot in 1856, features which were soon adopted by the other colonies.

In 1858 gold was discovered in the Brisbane district in considerable quantities, though not on the scale of 1851. The consequent growth of its population led to its separation from New South Wales as the colony of Queensland (1859). From the first it enjoyed responsible government. In 1867 Western Australia ceased to receive convicts, mainly on account of the strong protests of the other colonies. In the following year it received representative institutions, but it was not considered fit for responsible government until 1890.

Since the grant of self-government the Australian colonies have steadily moved in the direction of advanced democracy. Such features as the payment of members, a reduction of the period for which the Assembly is elected, women's suffrage, the referendum, and the abolition of plural voting have made the Australian constitutions the most democratic in the world. Not only the machinery but the spirit is democratic: as far as state action can ensure it, all Australian citizens are given equal opportunities. The Commonwealth Government, for example, provides its Naval Cadets with uniform (including football boots); pays for their messing; gives them a first-class railway ticket and 6*s.* a day for their travelling expenses when they go home on leave; and supplies them with a full kit when they go to sea as midshipmen.

In the second half of the 19th century the economic development of Australia proceeded rapidly. The gloomy picture of the interior painted by its first explorers was modified by later experience and a better understanding of the country. The salt-bush which covered such large areas, unattractive though it appeared, was highly appreciated by sheep, while in other districts subterranean rivers could be tapped by deep bores; so that a much smaller proportion of the country had to be written off as "desert" than was originally supposed. Refrigerating machinery provided a fresh stimulus to sheep- and cattle-farming. Mining continued to be an important feature. In 1892 and 1893 rich gold-reefs were discovered in the desert ranges of Western Australia. Coal, silver, copper, tin and lead are worked. Industry is still mainly confined to preparing raw materials for export, and Australia cannot hope to become a great manufacturing country until her population is much bigger[1].

Australia, however, is not prepared to sacrifice her people in the pursuit of riches, and is determined to avoid the evils

[1] The white population increased from 437,000 in 1851 to 4,445,000 in 1911. In the latter year Australia produced 768,000,000 lbs. of wool, 211,000,000 lbs. of butter, and £13,300,000 worth of wheat.

produced in other countries by the Industrial Revolution. The 8 hours' working day has been established in all the big industries. Some States have created Wages Boards, on which employers and workmen are represented. Others have set up Arbitration Courts. The principle has been laid down that if a mining company cannot earn sufficient profits to pay its employees a "living wage", it must suspend operations until it is enabled to do so by a rise in the price of metals or the introduction of cheaper methods of production. The state is concerned to give every citizen a good education, healthy conditions of labour, pure food, and opportunities for recreation. Australian statesmen are willing to admit that this policy may delay the establishment of certain industries which cannot at present flourish under such restrictions; but they are quite prepared to wait. Australia is a democracy which has organised itself for economic freedom: it wants neither millionaires nor paupers.

Much of the legislation just mentioned has been the work of the Labour party, but all Australian parties are willing to entrust the state with wide powers not only of supervision but of direct action in economic life. This readiness to confer on the government functions which in most countries are left to private enterprise is partly the result of history and partly due to the simple structure of society. The first colonists were provided by the state with rations, tools, and seed, and sold their produce to the state at a fixed price. When, later, gold-fields and pasture lands were found in the interior, no private capitalists would have risked building railways to connect them with the coast. The first important railway, from Melbourne to Bendigo, was 100 miles in length and cost the Government of Victoria £4,800,000. In order to provide the Kalgoorlie gold-field with water, the Westralian Government constructed a reservoir near the coast and pumped the water over a distance of more than 350 miles. Between 1870 and 1872 South Australia constructed the trans-Continental telegraph from Adelaide to Palmerston, where it joined the English cable. If the state had not under-

taken such enterprises, the development of the country would have been hampered. "Some Australian railways have no immediate chance of paying interest on their cost, unless the kangaroos take season tickets." But on the whole, the policy has been justified. In 1912 there were over 18,000 miles of state-owned railways, on the working of which, after paying running expenses and the interest on loans, there was a profit of 0·6 per cent. In a similar spirit the state has not hesitated to encourage industry by building roads, harbours, refrigerating factories, and sugar mills.

The above facts help to explain the comparative lateness of Australian federation. It seems strange that neighbouring communities with a common origin and common ideals should not have combined earlier. The fact is that for a long time there was no great incentive to union, and there was a strong argument against it. The Australian colonists were all traders, and they traded in the same goods. Each was afraid that federation would mean that its assets would go to pay its neighbours' debts. This competitive spirit was all very well as long as they felt safe in their isolation: federation was seen to be necessary when they began to feel the need of a common foreign policy and common measures of defence.

In the second half of the century the islands of the Pacific attracted increasing numbers of European and American traders, and in the last quarter they were partitioned among Great Britain, France, the United States of America, and Germany. The Australians were irritated in 1864 by the establishment of a French convict settlement in New Caledonia. It was largely owing to their representations that Great Britain annexed the Fiji islands in 1874. Later, they were afraid of French designs on the New Hebrides, and of German designs on the eastern half of New Guinea (of which the western half was Dutch). The pressure they brought to bear on the Home Government led to the neutralisation of the New Hebrides under Anglo-French administration (1887), but Germany was able to establish

herself in North-East New Guinea (1884) and Samoa (1886–1899). Though the German annexation of North-East New Guinea led to the British occupation of the South-East quarter of the island, the Australians felt that it was a menace to their safety. There was no adequate machinery, however, for protecting the interests of Australia as a whole. Their common views could be expressed only by an inter-colonial conference, to which individual colonies often refused to send representatives. Such conferences, moreover, were like meetings between the ambassadors of sovereign states: the majority had no power to bind the minority, and even unanimity at the conference did not necessarily lead to action on the part of the collective governments. In 1885 a step forward was taken by the creation of a Federal Council of Australia. Even this body had no effective powers: its functions were purely advisory, and membership was voluntary.

By this time, however, the movement in favour of closer union was becoming too strong to be ignored. The occupation by European powers of islands which might be made into naval bases induced the Australian representatives at the Colonial Conference held in London in 1887 to pay the expenses of maintaining a cruiser squadron and torpedo boats in their waters. Such a matter, however, concerned all the Australian colonies. Under the existing system any colony might cease to contribute towards a squadron which protected all alike.

Another subject in which all were interested was the policy of "a White Australia". In the early days, when labour was scarce, Chinese had been brought in to act as shepherds, and Kanakas from the South Sea islands to work on the Queensland sugar plantations. After the middle of the century most of the colonies had placed obstacles in the way of Asiatic immigration, and in the eighties it was made almost impossible for Chinese to enter the country. Though Queensland planters insisted that they could not do without Kanaka labour, the other colonies were strongly opposed to its continuance. A definite policy was being de-

veloped of excluding Asiatics on political, social, and economic grounds, because they would lower the rate of wages and the standard of living, and endanger democracy. But Japan was adopting Western methods and China was stirring in her sleep. Would they acquiesce in the exclusion of their people from a country whose population averaged less than 1·5 per square mile? It was impossible to overlook the fact that the "White Australia" policy might have to be defended.

It was in such an atmosphere that a National Convention met in 1891 and drew up a draft constitution. Then came a period of drought, strikes and bank failures, and it had to be postponed. But the arguments in favour of federation were becoming stronger with time, and the economic troubles of the early nineties helped to convince the colonies that they could not stand alone. Another convention met in 1897, and in 1898 submitted a bill to the Colonial Parliaments. After various amendments had been carried, it passed the Colonial and Imperial Parliaments, and received the Queen's assent on July 9th, 1900.

The framers of the Commonwealth of Australia examined the constitutions of other federal states and adopted the features which seemed to suit their requirements. The existing Colonial Governments would have to surrender some of their functions to the Commonwealth Government, but they would not disappear. It was not desirable to establish a highly centralised government for a whole continent which contained communities in different stages of development, and the external pressure which made for federation was a potential not an actual danger. Thus the powers made over to the Commonwealth Government were less than those retained. The Australian Colonies became States of the Commonwealth of Australia; their Parliaments remained under the control of the Imperial, not the Commonwealth Parliament; their Governors were appointed by the Crown, not by the Governor-General. In the distribution of powers between the Federal and State governments, the Commonwealth constitu-

tion follows that of the U.S.A. in enumerating and limiting the powers of the Federal Parliament, and leaving to the State Parliaments all powers not so specified.

The principal legislative powers entrusted to the Commonwealth Parliament are concerned with defence, posts, telegraphs and telephones, aids to navigation, quarantine, customs, family and mercantile law, and extradition treaties. The State Parliaments retain their powers over such important matters as education, police, agriculture, land and industrial legislation and fisheries. So far, the States have kept their railways, which they were free by the Act of 1900 to transfer to the Commonwealth. The comparative importance of Commonwealth and State functions may be gathered from the fact that in the financial year 1911–1912 Commonwealth expenditure averaged £3. 4*s.* 6*d.* per head (of which £1. 3*s.* 7*d.* was devoted to naval and military services), while State expenditure amounted to £8. 18*s.* 10*d.* per head. In 1909 the Commonwealth government created a navy, to which the British Admiralty lent officers until Australia had trained her own. In the same year a system of universal military training was begun which would in time make all men between 18 and 36 members of a citizen army. When the Great War came, Australia was not unprepared.

CHAPTER XIV

NEW ZEALAND

TASMAN, the first European to reach New Zealand, was prevented from forming a just estimate of the islands through the hostility of the natives, who murdered some of his crew when they landed. On his first voyage Captain Cook spent some months exploring the coast of South Island, and on his second and third voyages he again visited the country. After his time its shores were frequented by European sealers, whalers and traders, and at the beginning of the 19th century a few white men settled in North Island. In 1814 an Anglican Mission was founded in the Bay of Islands; other denominations followed; and, as the country became better known, Englishmen at home and in Australia began to consider the possibility of its colonisation.

Goldsmith's description of Italy may well be applied to New Zealand. Its inhabitants declare its climate to be the best in the world. It enjoys the sunshine of Southern Europe without its extremes of temperature: white men can work in the open all the year round, and cattle need not be housed in the winter. The land is green and fertile, drought is almost unknown, cereals and fruits of almost every kind flourish. Altogether it seemed an admirable place for English emigrants except for two drawbacks: it was on the other side of the globe, and it was already occupied.

Thanks to steam navigation the factor of distance was becoming less important, but the Maoris were a serious obstacle to the settlement of New Zealand by white men.

With the possible exception of the American Indians, the Maoris were the most highly developed native race with whom British colonists had come into contact. Their ideal of life in

many ways resembled that of the Athenians—symmetrical development of mind and body. Labour they despised as base, mechanical and insipid: their lively and imaginative temper demanded constant excitement in rhetoric, music, dancing, and above all in fighting. In their constant inter-tribal warfare they showed great cruelty and rarely gave quarter, but it was not the warfare of savages: in everything they did they gave evidence of their intelligence. Their *pahs* or fortifications may be compared with the earliest castles of medieval Europe. Built in positions which could not be overlooked, they were surrounded by a double line of palisades and were provided with ovens, magazines and barracks. The gateways of the palisaded roads were fortified with towers, while the approach of an enemy could be discovered from look-out platforms on the trees outside. Politically the Maoris were still in the clan stage, being governed by numerous chiefs. As is the case in all such communities, the land was the property of the tribe and could be alienated only by the tribe as a whole. Each member of the tribe had the right to the use of a certain amount without having any individual property in it (cf. p. 99).

It is clear that a country peopled by such a race could not have become British in haphazard fashion. Organization and method would be necessary—qualities which have usually been lacking in the foundation of our colonies. In 1837, however, Gibbon Wakefield, the advocate of systematic colonisation, formed the New Zealand Association. Owing to the hostility of the Cabinet, the Association failed to secure from Parliament the powers it needed. There had been a British Resident Magistrate in the Bay of Islands since 1833, but the Government had repeatedly declared that New Zealand could not be considered a British possession. The promoters of the scheme refused to abandon their intention and in 1839 founded the New Zealand Company, with Lord Durham as chairman, intending to carry out their plan on their own responsibility. In 1839 they sent out a party of emigrants, preceded by Colonel Wakefield

(Gibbon Wakefield's brother), who was to buy lands for them from the Maoris. This step roused the Cabinet to action. Captain Hobson was sent out to be Lieutenant-Governor, under the Governor of New South Wales, of such territory as might be ceded to Great Britain. On his arrival in January 1840, Hobson announced that only such titles to land would be recognised as were derived from or confirmed by Her Majesty. In February he succeeded in concluding the important Treaty of Waitangi with over 500 chiefs, who surrendered their sovereign rights to the Queen, being confirmed by her in the possession of their property. If at any time they wished to sell their land, the Queen was to have the right of pre-emption.

In October 1840 Hobson chose the site of Auckland for the capital. In 1841 New Zealand was made independent of New South Wales and was given a nominated Legislative Council. In the same year the New Zealand Company, which had already planted several settlements, including Wellington and Nelson, was incorporated as a chartered Company with a capital of £300,000. To it was due the success of the Colony at the start, for it provided most of the early immigrants. To it, also, was due much of the trouble with the Maoris.

Even before 1839 disputes had arisen from the action of Europeans in "buying" land from individual Maoris in return for a few trinkets or manufactured goods. Such transactions were condemned as illegal by the tribe concerned, which would forcibly prevent the purchaser from taking possession of the land. It must be remembered that the Maoris were not ignorant savages, and that they were quite capable of giving a clear explanation of their system of land tenure. In such circumstances it was obviously desirable that the Crown alone should buy land in large lots, which could afterwards be sold to immigrants. The New Zealand Company, however, was such a powerful body that even Hobson was unable to prevent it from breaking the Treaty of Waitangi by dealing with the Maoris direct; though, in justice to the Company, it must be admitted

that it was willing to pay a fair price for the land it bought. In 1843 a disputed purchase nearly provoked a serious Maori war. Captain Fitzroy, who came out as Governor in that year, definitely broke the Treaty of Waitangi by permitting direct purchase on payment of a fee to the Government. This ill-advised step led to his recall in 1845. His successor, Captain (in 1848 Sir) George Grey, was one of the ablest colonial officials of the century. On his arrival he found that the Maoris were convinced that the Company meant to dispossess them of their lands, a view which was confirmed by the speeches made on the subject in the British House of Commons, the reports of which they read with great interest. Grey stated emphatically that the Government would maintain the Treaty, strictly forbade private sales, and completely won the confidence of the chiefs. During his rule (1845–1853) the relations between the two races were excellent.

In 1847 the Whig Government, which was very well-disposed towards the New Zealand Company, lent it £250,000 and made over to it the Crown lands in South Island until 1850. The Company was able to bring pressure upon Grey to buy the island from the Maoris in 1848, and through its instrumentality the provinces of Otago (1848) and Canterbury (1850) were founded, the first by a Scottish Presbyterian, the second by a Church of England Society.

In 1850 the dissolution of the Company put an end to the dual system, whose disadvantages had become clear now that the colony was capable of standing alone. In the following year the British Parliament passed an act establishing a federal constitution on lines suggested by Grey. The colony was divided into six provinces, each of which had an elective Provincial Council and a "superintendent", or head of the provincial executive. The Parliament consisted of a Legislative Council, whose members were appointed for life by the Governor, and a popularly elected House of Representatives. The first Parliament did not meet until 1854, when the Australian Colonies

were discussing the bills which gave them responsible government. Infected with the same spirit, the New Zealand House of Representatives wished to make the Governor's Executive Council ministerial instead of official. When this change was made in 1856, New Zealand enjoyed full responsible government, which was marked by the transfer to the Provincial Councils of the administration of Crown lands.

This last action was viewed with alarm by the great majority of the Maoris, who clung to their own civilisation and despised those members of their race who adopted European customs. Their own numbers were diminishing, while fresh British immigrants were arriving every year. Though they owned by far the greater part of North Island, they not unreasonably felt insecure. If they were to resist the encroachments of the white men, whom they still outnumbered by nearly two to one, they must convert their loose tribal organisation into a powerful confederacy under a single leader, and must refuse to sell their lands even to the government. Such was the origin of the "King" movement, which was joined by most of the tribes of the centre of North Island.

In 1860 a conflict was precipitated through the action of the Governor, Colonel Gore-Brown, in buying the Waitara Block from a lesser chief in spite of the warning of the supreme chief of the tribe that the sale was illegal and that it would lead to war. The Governor was empowered by the Colonial Office, which still retained control of Maori affairs, to decide disputes on his own responsibility without consulting his Cabinet. In his ignorance of the land system of the Maoris and of their warlike character, he disregarded the warning and sent a party to survey the land. The tribe concerned pulled up the pegs, erected a *pah*, and beat off the attack of a British force. Reinforcements were sent from Australia and England, but the Maori "King", Potatau, brought the newly formed confederacy into the field against them. The Maoris, who fought with splendid courage and great skill, succeeded in inflicting more than one defeat on

British regular troops, and never lost heart in a struggle which was foredoomed to failure. At the end of 1861 Sir George Grey was sent back as Governor. In spite of his influence, which induced many of the loyal Maoris to fight against the rebels, peace was not made until 1866. Shortly after Grey's departure, another insurrection was raised by the Hau-Haus, a party of irreconcilable fanatics who thought themselves invulnerable and who, after being convinced of their error, still continued to display the most obstinate valour. They were finally defeated in 1869, since when there has been peace between the two races.

During the war Sir George Grey had prevailed on the British Government to entrust the colony with the management of native affairs. This trust has been faithfully discharged and the Maoris have been given representation in the Executive Council and House of Representatives. The decline in their numbers still continues, but at a reduced rate, and there is some hope that it will be altogether arrested by the gospel of some of their younger leaders, who look for the salvation of their race in work.

Ever since the institution of the provincial system New Zealand statesmen had been divided on its merits. The central government was strengthened by the need for unity during the Maori wars, and in 1870 it began a policy of railway construction which further increased its importance. The "centralists" were willing to admit that the provincial system had done good work in encouraging development from many centres, but they urged that its day was past and that the country was now sufficiently unified for a single government. Their arguments carried the day at the elections of 1875, and in 1876 the provincial organisation was abolished.

The political development of New Zealand since those days has been influenced by, and has influenced, perhaps to an even greater extent, that of Australia. Its constitution is equally democratic and its views of the functions of the state are similar.

In New Zealand, as in Australia, the government regulates the conditions of labour, fixes a minimum wage, and tries to prevent industrial strife by making arbitration compulsory and by penalising strikes and lock-outs. The state owns and manages property of all sorts, from railways to thermal baths; it has its own experimental farm and its own vineyard; it acts as an insurance agent and as a money-lender. The land laws aim at preventing the formation of big estates and at encouraging small-holders. The criminal law places the first offender under strict and careful probation instead of sending him to gaol, while it detains indefinitely those habitual criminals in whom vice seems an incurable disease. On the other hand, prisoners who seem capable of reformation are employed in useful and healthy work such as farming and afforestation.

The people of New Zealand bring to the problems of government and of social life the same mental qualities as those of Australia—a readiness to learn from the experience of older countries coupled with a dread of slavish imitation, a refusal to be ruled by the dead hand, a hatred of snobbery, and a profound belief in the value of education. It may therefore seem strange that New Zealand refused to become a member of the Australian Commonwealth. When, however, it is remembered that some of the Australian Colonies themselves were reluctant, it is not surprising that New Zealand, separated from Australia by 1200 miles of sea, should have thought that the advantages would be more than counterbalanced by the disadvantages, and should have preferred to retain her insular freedom.

CHAPTER XV

INDIA

At the beginning of our period the British dominions in India were still administered by the East India Company. Founded as a purely mercantile association in 1600, the Company was at first dependent on the goodwill of the princes in whose dominions it established factories. In the period after the death of Aurangzeb (1707) it was forced, in the general lack of governance, to consult its own interests and safety. Its development into a military and territorial power was hastened by the competition of the French Company. The Moghul Empire was crumbling to pieces; on its ruins Dupleix, who was Governor of Pondicherry, the chief of the French settlements, from 1741 to 1754, determined to erect a French Empire. With this object he interfered in the confused politics and warfare of the native states. He it was who discovered that the superiority of European over Indian troops lay not so much in courage or physique as in discipline, and that a native army trained and led by Europeans was a formidable weapon. But this discovery was adopted, not only by native princes, who called in French adventurers to reorganise their armies, but by the British, who possessed in Clive a leader of genius. In any case, Dupleix had concentrated his attention too exclusively on India itself, not realising that, even had he established an imposing empire, it would have been top-heavy unless it were firmly based on sea-power. This lesson was clearly brought out in the Seven Years' War (1756–63), when the English, thanks to their overwhelming superiority at sea, took all the French possessions, thus virtually ending the duel.

Even before this, in a war of reprisals waged against

the Moghul Emperor, Aurangzeb (1687–9) the East India Company had begun the struggle with native powers which converted it into a governing body. These conquests by a joint-stock company eventually attracted the attention of the Home Government, and led to the passage of Pitt's India Act of 1784. This measure established that system of "double government" which remained virtually unchanged until the Mutiny. The Company was still to administer the British dominions in India and to appoint all officials; but its policy, both civil and military, was to be dictated from London by a Board of Control consisting of six Privy Councillors, presided over by a Secretary of State.

The Board of Control and the Board of Directors were agreed on a policy of non-intervention in native politics: the 34th section of Pitt's India Act stated that "to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and policy of this nation." But in a period of kaleidoscopic change among the Indian states, of ever-shifting boundaries, of constant warfare, of intrigue and revolution, such a policy could not be maintained, and it was definitely abandoned by Lord Wellesley, Governor-General from 1798 to 1805.

On his arrival in India, Wellesley found that Tipu Sahib of Mysore had welcomed French officers and carried on a correspondence with Napoleon, who was at that moment in Egypt. On Tipu's refusal to forsake the French alliance, Wellesley allied himself with the Marathas and the Nizam against him. Tipu was defeated and slain, half his kingdom was annexed, and the other half given to a representative of the old Hindu dynasty, who concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Company. These subsidiary treaties were an integral part of Wellesley's policy. By them the native ruler received the support of an English garrison in return for a grant of territory, while he undertook to place his relations with other states under the control of the Company. Both parties gained by this arrange-

ment: the native prince was able to disband his mutinous and untrustworthy mercenaries and was assured of the protection of the British in case of attack; while the Company profited by the extension of its peace.

It was Wellesley's aim to apply this system throughout India. He held that the British could not remain stationary, that they must either advance or lose ground. He believed that it was their duty as well as their destiny to become the paramount power, and that they would prevent much bloodshed and lawlessness if they made straight for this goal. The main obstacle was the Maratha Confederacy, which could muster hundreds of thousands of brave and skilful soldiers, including the finest light cavalry in the country. The Marathas had extended their rule over Western and Central India, while they levied blackmail on practically every state of the peninsula. They themselves aimed at becoming paramount, and saw their organised plunder of the other states threatened by Wellesley's plans. The members of the Confederacy were, however, jealous of each other, and Wellesley was able to make subsidiary treaties with the Peshwa and the Gaekwar of Baroda before dealing with Sindhia and Bhonsla. These last were beaten and deprived of part of their territories, including Delhi, when the Directors, alarmed at such enterprise during the crisis of the struggle with Napoleon, recalled Wellesley before he had finished his work. The Marathas had been beaten, but their power was not utterly destroyed.

Wellesley's successors, Lord Minto (1807–1813) and Lord Hastings (1813–1823) were strictly forbidden to engage in wars, and were themselves prejudiced against his policy. It became evident, however, that his views had been correct. The elements of disorder which had been expelled from the recently acquired possessions of the Company and from the Indian states dependent on it were now concentrated in a smaller space. Disbanded soldiers of fortune organised themselves in companies and descended on the districts which were beginning

to enjoy the blessings of peace. The *Pindáris*, as they were called, usually invaded a state in a body from two to three thousand strong, which split up into parties of two or three hundred each. They travelled light, they were well mounted, and they were accustomed to extraordinary fatigue; so that they were able to decamp with their plunder before a force could be sent against them. A Commission which enquired into a raid of 1816 reported that "they were eleven days and a half in the Company's territories. The total number of the villages they plundered were (*sic*) 339, of persons killed 182, of persons wounded 505 (184 severely), and 3603 persons were tortured in different ways" to make them disclose their valuables. The inhabitants of a village they surrounded in this raid set fire to their homes and rushed into the flames rather than fall into the hands of such enemies.

After this particular raid Hastings determined on strong measures. The real difficulty was that the Pindáris found a refuge in the territories of the Maratha chiefs, who were anxious to revive their confederacy and who saw in them valuable auxiliaries. Hastings, however, was bent on organising Central India and making its rulers responsible for good order. In 1817 the Marathas were beaten, deprived of part of their territories, and forced to sign subsidiary treaties. The ground was thus cut from under the feet of the Pindáris, who were hunted down within three months.

The whole of India except Sind, the Punjab, and Nepal was now either directly ruled by the Company or bound to it by subsidiary treaties. The period of almost unbroken peace from 1806 to 1838 gave leisure for the organisation of the English territories. There was much to be done; for in the century which had elapsed since the death of Aurangzeb, few districts had known law and order. The Company was served by a number of reformers of high character and great ability, who were guided by two main principles. In the first place, they wished to respect Indian ideas and customs as far as

possible. Thus the land tax regulations differed in the different states, as they were based upon a careful enquiry into the local customs. In the second place, they sought to give India what was best in European civilisation. In 1835 the foundations were laid of an educational system. Macaulay's famous minute decided that English, not Sanskrit or Arabic, should be the language of instruction. Where native customs were flagrantly opposed to European ideas of morality, as were infanticide and *sati* (the burning of a Hindu widow on the funeral pyre of her husband), they were declared illegal, in spite of their quasi-religious sanction. The English officials of this period repeatedly laid stress on the fact that their powers must be exercised for the benefit of the Indians, until they should be able to govern themselves. It was partly in this spirit that Parliament passed an Act in 1833 which deprived the Company of its trading functions and made it a governing body pure and simple.

Another period of warfare began with the Governor-Generalship of Lord Auckland (1836–1842). Auckland had been a member of Melbourne's cabinet, and was in full sympathy with its foreign policy. It will be remembered that one of Palmerston's guiding principles was fear of Russia. The gradual extension of Russian authority in the direction of Persia and Afghanistan made Auckland anxious for the North-West frontier of India. At that time Afghanistan was separated from British India by the Punjab, whose ruler, Ranjit Sing, was on excellent terms with the Company. Dost Mohammad, the Amir of Kabul, was encouraged by a Russian Agent to attempt to recover Peshawur from Ranjit Sing, and thus to control the Khaibar Pass on both sides. Auckland imagined that this would mean a Russian invasion of India, and he tried to force Dost Mohammad to give up his design. When diplomatic means failed, he sent a force to dethrone him and to establish a pretender on the throne of Afghanistan. At first his bold policy seemed justified. The British army found transport difficult over deserts and passes; but it entered Kabul without

encountering armed opposition (August 1839). Dost Mohammad gave himself up, and the puppet king was enthroned. For two years all went well, and the country was so quiet that the government contemplated reducing the army of occupation. Then, in November 1841, a riot broke out at Kabul in which the British political officer was murdered. General Elphinstone remained inactive, and made no use of his troops to restore order. The chiefs were encouraged to join the movement, and the riot became a revolution. Elphinstone, who was a martyr to gout, was incapable of forming a decision, and at last concluded a treaty with Dost Mohammad's son, by which he promised to surrender all the treasure and most of the guns, in return for a safe-conduct back to India. On January 6th, 1842, the British army of 15,000 or 16,000 men began its mid-winter march through some of the wildest country in the world. The fierce tribesmen paid no respect to the safe-conduct, and harried the column as it straggled through the defiles of the Kabul river. On January 13th Dr Brydon reached Jalalabad, and informed the horrified garrison that he was the sole survivor of an army.

What could be done to retrieve this disaster was done. The garrisons of Jalalabad and Kandahar held out gallantly, and, after the despatch of reinforcements from India, fought their way to Kabul. There they recovered the ladies and children (who had not been ill-treated), and, after blowing up the bazaar and palace, withdrew to India. Dost Mohammad was set free and soon defeated his rivals. Now that Englishmen had seen the passes for themselves, they refused to believe that a Russian army of any size could invade India through Afghanistan. It was nearly forty years before an English army was again sent against Kabul.

The Afghan policy of Lord Auckland led to the annexation of Sind and of the Punjab. The rulers of Sind had naturally objected to the passage of the expedition of 1839 through their country. Disputes arose about the interpretation of their treaties

with the Company, and in 1843 their territory was annexed with little difficulty.

The conquest of the Punjab was undertaken with more reluctance. The Punjab was the country of the Sikhs, or "disciples", a religious body founded in the 16th century, whose creed was a mixture of the best elements of Hinduism and Mohammedanism. From 1780 to 1839 they were ruled over by Ranjit Sing, who organised his army on European lines. Strong though he was, he was too wary to quarrel with the Company. On his death the army became supreme, and was encouraged by the Kabul disaster to clamour for a trial of strength with the English. In December 1845 60,000 Sikhs crossed the Sutlej, men of fine physique, admirably disciplined, burning with religious zeal, and armed with modern weapons. General Gough underestimated their fighting qualities, and lost 2,415 men killed and wounded in an indecisive battle at Firozshahr before he crushed them at Sobraon (February 1846). The Sikhs could offer no further resistance, and ceded part of their territory; but in April 1848 they again rose, this time with the aid of Dost Mohammad. Gough had learnt little from experience. On January 13th, 1849, he attacked the Sikhs at Chilianwala without reconnoitring their position, and lost 697 men killed, 1,641 wounded, 4 guns and 3 standards. In February he atoned for this reverse by winning a decisive victory at Gujarat, which forced the Sikhs to submit. The Punjab was annexed, and was administered by a commission which included Henry and John Lawrence.

When the second Sikh war broke out, the Governor-General was Lord Dalhousie, a disciple of Peel and a man of great ability, fine character, and remarkable energy. In his eight years of office (1848–1856) he wore out his frail constitution, and returned to his Scottish home only to die. He gave his very best to India, throwing himself heart and soul into every scheme which could improve the condition of her peoples. He reorganised the postal system, fixing the charge for letters at half an

anna ($\frac{3}{4}d.$). He planned and began the construction of a system of trunk railways. Within two years from his arrival 4,000 miles of telegraph were in working order. The Grand Trunk Road, which had reached Delhi, was extended through the new province of the Punjab. Irrigation works were begun on a huge scale: in April 1854 the main Ganges canal was opened, which was 525 miles long and 170 feet broad at its widest point. Branches had already been begun which would bring its total length to 900 miles and enable it to irrigate 1,500,000 acres of land. Dalhousie improved agriculture, encouraged horse and sheep breeding, tea and cotton growing, and the planting of fruit-trees. Nor was it only the material side of life which interested him: he instituted a system of vernacular schools, and established Universities at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay.

The scattered nature of the Company's dominions was a serious hindrance to the execution of such vast schemes. "Dalhousie was a Scotchman bred on the Shorter Catechism, and he had a sort of ferocious logicality of mind and a resolute thoroughness which were curiously un-English: he was not a man of compromises and half-measures." Many of the Indian princes under the protection of the Company were so weak and incompetent that they would have lost their thrones from foreign conquest or internal revolt had that protection been removed. Dalhousie disapproved of this system, and definitely aimed at consolidating the Company's possessions by the incorporation of Indian states. On the death without heirs of the ruler of a state which had been created or revived by the Company, Dalhousie, applying the strict letter of the law, refused to admit the claims of an adopted son, and insisted that the state had lapsed and become part of the British dominions. On these grounds he incorporated seven of the central states in British India. His annexation of Oudh stood on a different footing. The king of Oudh was a miserable creature who allowed his subjects to be ground down by the parasites of his court. In 1856, after

refusing to heed the repeated warnings of the Governor-General, he was dethroned and given a pension.

In certain regions there was much unrest even before Dalhousie assumed office, and this unrest was increased by some of his reforms, in which Hindus were apt to see an organised plot against the caste observances which constituted their religion. The telegraph was obviously worked by black magic. The Government's object in building railways was to mingle different castes. When Dalhousie removed all legal obstacles to the re-marriage of Hindu widows, he was only showing his design more openly. In refusing to admit the validity of adoption he was striking, not at a civil contract, but at a religious ceremony; since it was necessary for a Hindu to have a son to perform his funeral rites. Moreover, though a strong case could be made out for each of his annexations separately, taken together they seemed to confirm his policy of uprooting native institutions.

With all his brilliant gifts, Dalhousie lacked that sympathy which would have enabled him to understand the attitude of Indians towards his reforms. Convinced that his measures were just and beneficial, he cared little whether they were popular. He annexed Oudh in the interests of its inhabitants, who would undoubtedly be governed more justly, more honestly, and more efficiently by the British than by their incompetent king. But the East cares little for material progress. The people of Oudh preferred the personal rule of their own king to the colourless efficiency of an alien bureaucracy. Men like Henry Lawrence and Outram, who had gained a sympathetic insight into the conservative Indian mind, opposed the policy of wholesale annexation.

Dalhousie was not blind to the fact that his work might cause alarm, and that its ultimate sanction was force. In his last official minute he wrote:—"No prudent man who has any knowledge of Eastern affairs would ever venture to predict the maintenance of continued peace within our Eastern possessions...War from

without, or rebellion from within, may at any time be raised against us." He therefore warned the Government to maintain a proper proportion of white troops in the army. Since the time of Clive the British army in India had consisted mainly of Indian troops, of whom more than three-quarters were Hindus. Besides sharing in the general unrest, the sepoys had particular grievances of their own. Now that the Punjab was part of British India, service beyond the Sutlej carried no extra allowances. The General Service Enlistment Oath of 1856, which made willingness to serve overseas a condition of enlistment, was very unpopular even among old soldiers, who thought themselves bound by the oath taken by recruits. Then came the rumour that the cartridges for the new Enfield rifle were greased with the fat of swine and cows[1]. Whether the tale was true or not is still uncertain: the important fact is that the Government had given no consideration to a point which it regarded as trivial. Frenzied with terror, the sepoys rejected the assurances of their officers that no attack was intended on their religion, and gave ready credence to the gossip of the bazaars.

Had the military prestige of Great Britain not been tarnished by recent events, the smouldering discontent might never have burst into flame. But the mistakes made in the Afghan and Sikh wars had shaken the confidence of the sepoys in their officers. Exaggerated reports of the blunders committed in the Crimea had strengthened the impression that the military power of Great Britain was declining. The recent annexations had led to an increase of native troops, who now numbered over 300,000; while the white troops, who had furnished contingents for the Crimea, amounted to less than 40,000. The native officers, though for the most part passively loyal, had no control over their men. The standard of efficiency among the British officers was low. Lord Roberts criticised "the strict system of promotion by seniority which entailed the employment of brigadiers of seventy, colonels of sixty and captains of fifty." "Command-

[1] The cow is sacred to the Hindu; the pig unclean to the Mohammedan.

ing officers are inefficient"; wrote Dalhousie, "brigadiers are no better; divisional officers are worse than either, because they are older and more done." Few of the senior officers were equal to the crisis: India was saved by men who had left the army and had sought scope for their talents in administrative work.

Dalhousie had been succeeded in 1856 by Lord Canning, third son of the Prime Minister. In the spring of 1857 the tension among the Indians increased. An old prophecy was revived that the British *raj* would end a century after Plassey. *Chapatis* (flat cakes of flour and water) were carried from village to village as a vague warning that something mysterious was about to happen. The sepoys were subject alternately to fits of gloom and of excitement. As early as February the General at Barrackpore wrote, "We have been dwelling upon a mine ready for explosion."

In the summer, after some preliminary rumblings, the storm burst. On May 9th, 85 native troopers at Meerut, who had refused to accept the cartridges served out to them, were sentenced by a court-martial of native officers to ten years' imprisonment. The next day was a Sunday. When the white troops were at evening service, the sepoys rose and rescued their imprisoned comrades. Then, half in panic, they began to march to Delhi, forty miles away. Though General Hewitt had almost as many English as Indian troops under his command, he made no attempt to pursue the mutineers and nip the movement in the bud. Arrived at Delhi, the sepoys dragged the aged king from his retirement and proclaimed him Moghul Emperor. The city was soon in their power, and the revolt seemed likely to become a revolution. Canning at once summoned reinforcements from Burma, Ceylon and Madras, and diverted the troops which were on their way to the war in China. At the time, however, only 3,800 British soldiers could be collected against Delhi, and these had to content themselves with seizing the Ridge to the north of the city (June 8th).

After a brief interval of uneasy calm, the movement spread down the valley of the Ganges to the North-West Provinces and Oudh, where the discontent caused by annexation had been rendered more dangerous by a series of unfortunate events. Since Dalhousie had annexed Oudh on the very eve of his retirement (February 1856), he had refrained from cramping his successor's freedom by arranging the details of administration, of which the most important was the dismantling of the 250 castles and the disbanding of the 100,000 retainers of the nobles. Unfortunately Colonel James Outram[1], who had been Resident at the court of the deposed king, was prevented by ill-health from remaining to superintend the change of government. Coverley Jackson, his successor, not only lacked his sympathy and influence, but by his harsh treatment of the *tálukdárs*, or revenue collectors, created the impression that the British Government had no respect for vested interests. Jackson was relieved by Sir Henry Lawrence, who was admirably fitted to remove this impression, had there been time; but when the Mutiny broke out he had only been two months at Lucknow, and the nobles had not been disarmed.

The rebellion of five native regiments at Lucknow on May 30th gave the signal for a general rising throughout Oudh. On June 30th Lawrence marched out to meet the rebels in the open, but was betrayed by his native gunners and forced to retire into the Residency, which he had fortified. With 927 Englishmen, including civilians, and 765 faithful sepoys he defended this position against an army which soon numbered over 50,000. On July 2nd he was mortally wounded, but he left a worthy successor in General Inglis, who maintained an impreg-

[1] Outram, "the Bayard of India", was the original of Jan Chinn in Kipling's *Tomb of his Ancestors*. The story of his foundation of the Bhil Irregular Corps shows what marvellous results may be achieved in the treatment of savage tribes by means of perseverance, humanity, and a commanding personality. His whole life illustrates what was best in the rule of the Company, and teaches the old lesson that institutions are less important than the men who work them.

nable defence in spite of heat, cholera and fever. Had the Residency fallen, and had the Oudh mutineers been free to join their comrades at Delhi, the British power in India must have been overthrown for the time.

In many another station in Northern India isolated British garrisons maintained a stubborn defence against overwhelming odds. It was not simply that individual deeds of valour were performed: men and women, soldiers and civilians, officers and men, their numbers reduced by disease and the attacks of the enemy, their strength sapped by the sweltering heat of an Indian summer, their nerves strained by ceaseless vigil, bore themselves as heroes during every minute of those awful months.

Of all the events of the Mutiny the most terrible occurred at Cawnpore. Here General Wheeler had relied implicitly on the loyalty of his native troops, and entrusted the treasure to the body-guard of the Nana Sahib. The Nana had a grudge against the Company, which had refused to pay him the pension granted to the ex-Peshwa, who had adopted him. He concealed his hatred and was on excellent terms with the English officers, whom he entertained lavishly at his residence at Bithur, not far from Cawnpore. On June 6th, the four native regiments at Cawnpore rebelled and marched to Bithur, where they proclaimed the Nana Peshwa, and asked him to lead them to Delhi. Thinking that he might be able to carve a kingdom for himself out of Oudh, he persuaded them to return to Cawnpore. Wheeler, who had made no adequate preparations for defence in case of an outbreak, concentrated his forces in the military hospital and its enclosure. Here 240 soldiers and 870 non-combatants defended a mud wall four feet high. The only well was commanded by rebel snipers, and water for washing was out of the question. Even under these conditions the garrison held out with such determination that the Nana despaired of capturing the place, and offered to provide the defenders with a safe-conduct and boats to take them down the Ganges. His offer was accepted, and on June 27th the embarkation took place. As soon

as all the English were on board, the boatmen set fire to the boats, and the sepoys on the bank poured a hail of bullets into them. Most of the boats stuck on the mud; two drifted to the bank; and one got away without oars, rudder, or provisions. After a series of incredible adventures, four of its occupants finally reached safety. The women and children, some 150 in number, were well treated until the Nana heard of the approach of the army of vengeance. Then, on July 15th, he sent in five ruffians to murder them. The assassins did their work imperfectly; but the bodies of all the victims, dead and dying alike, were tumbled into a dry well.

Meanwhile the news of the massacre at the river-bank had goaded the small relieving force to superhuman efforts. At the beginning of July General Havelock, who had just returned from the Persian campaign, collected 1,500 men at Allahabad. Though the Highlanders under his command were still wearing the woollen clothing which had been issued for a Persian winter, they covered the 126 miles to Cawnpore in nine days, winning four pitched battles on their way. The last two actions were fought on the 15th; that night the British marched 14 miles; and next day they scattered the Nana's forces before Cawnpore. A week later Havelock started for Lucknow. But transport was difficult, the rain was incessant, his men suffered from cholera, the whole country was hostile, and his communications were threatened by the Gwalior rebels. Despite the ardour of his men, who were for pressing on at all costs, he was compelled to retire to Cawnpore, there to await reinforcements.

Reinforcements were slow in coming. Failing to grasp the magnitude of the danger, the Home Government, instead of immediately despatching every available man by the overland route, were slow in sending even small bodies of troops in sailing ships *via* the Cape; thus it was near the end of October when the first reinforcements from England reached Calcutta. For the time being the fate of India depended on the forces already there.

The prospect was not entirely hopeless. If, as some authori-

ties believe, the Mutiny was the result of a carefully laid plot, it betrayed in its execution few traces of design. The efforts of the mutineers were not co-ordinated towards a single end. They were demoralised by their revolt against authority. The sepoys of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies, who were mainly recruited from the lower castes, were true to their salt Most important of all, the loyalty of the Punjab enabled it to be used as a base for the recapture of Delhi.

Though the Punjab had not long been part of British India, it was almost unaffected by the Mutiny. There were, it is true, sporadic outbreaks on the part of native regiments drawn from other parts of India, but the Sikhs themselves rallied to the side of the British—they know a man when they see one, and in John Lawrence and his subordinates, Herbert Edwardes, Neville Chamberlain, and John Nicholson, they found rulers after their own hearts. "Don't be afraid of acting on your own responsibility..." wrote Lawrence, "trust the Irregulars and the natives of the Punjab generally, but utterly mistrust the Regular army." Realising the supreme necessity of recapturing Delhi, even at the cost of abandoning the Punjab if necessary, he immediately sent the Guides, who marched 27 miles a day for three weeks, arriving at Delhi on June 9th. Meanwhile the sepoys in the Punjab were disarmed, a movable column traversed the province, and the Sikhs were enrolled in new regiments. Dost Mohammad of Afghanistan, who had fought against us in the Second Sikh War, remained faithful to the treaties of friendship which had since been concluded with him.

When all danger, internal and external, was thus averted, Lawrence sent John Nicholson (a Brigadier-General at 35) with the movable column to Delhi. When Nicholson arrived on August 14th he raised the British forces to 11,000 men; but 3,000 of these were in hospital, and the Ridge was exposed to ceaseless attacks from the 50,000 sepoys in the city. Under these circumstances Archdale Wilson, who was in command, was for remaining on the defensive, and was only persuaded with great

difficulty that the true policy was an offensive. On September 11th the batteries opened the bombardment; on the 14th the breaches were stormed; and after a week's house-to-house fighting, in which Nicholson was killed, the whole of Delhi was once more in British hands. Its recapture, which was mainly due to John Lawrence's foresight, was the turning-point of the Mutiny.

The day after Nicholson forced his way into Delhi, Havelock was joined at Cawnpore by Sir James Outram, who refused to take over the command until Lucknow was reached, serving meanwhile as a volunteer. Reaching the suburbs of Lucknow on September 25th, they had to fight their way through the maze of streets, overcoming obstacles which Havelock himself compared to those encountered at Saragossa, before they could join hands with Inglis. Though the combined forces were not strong enough to make a safe passage through the city for the women and children, the addition of 2,500 fighting men enabled the garrison to hold out until further help could come from Calcutta.

Sir Colin Campbell, the new Commander-in-Chief, had reached Calcutta on August 17th, and was organising the reinforcements which were beginning to arrive. Setting out on October 27th, he attacked Lucknow on November 14th, and reached the Residency on the 17th. Then, leaving Outram to hold the Alambagh outside the city (Havelock died during the evacuation), he safely withdrew the main garrison. He next turned against the Gwalior rebels, who had temporarily cut his communications by seizing Cawnpore. Completely defeating them, he rounded up the other mutineers and drove them into Lucknow. He could now muster over 30,000 men against a garrison of 150,000, and in March 1858 he again fought his way into Lucknow.

Unfortunately Campbell allowed the great majority of the rebel troops to make their escape from Lucknow, while a proclamation issued by Canning was interpreted by the landowners of Oudh as a measure of wholesale confiscation. In consequence,

a guerrilla warfare was still maintained in Oudh and Gwalior which proved exceedingly troublesome. The British armies, though uniformly successful in the field, were not large enough to garrison the whole of the disaffected area. It was not until April 1859 that the last rebel leader was captured and executed.

The vengeance wreaked upon the mutineers was as terrible as their crimes had been. According to the Governor-General, the special commissions established to try them were guilty of "indiscriminate judicial murder". More than 3,000 rebels were hanged at Delhi alone. Many of the condemned sepoys were made to lose caste before execution, thus being robbed of their hopes for the next world.

Another point worth noting in the story of the Mutiny is the fact that "the very reforms that excited so much alarm proved to be instruments for quelling the tumult of which alarm was one source." Had it not been for the roads, railways, and telegraphs which Dalhousie had made, and had he not pacified the Punjab, the task of restoring order would have been far harder.

It must be remembered also that the Mutiny was local and partial. It was confined almost entirely to the sepoys, and to the valley of the Ganges. Only in Oudh and Gwalior did it affect all classes of the population. The native princes either held aloof or rendered valuable aid to the British. Sikhs helped to take Delhi, Gurkhas to take Lucknow. The sepoys of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies remained loyal, and many of those in Bengal were faithful unto death. Such men as Havelock, Outram, Nicholson and the two Lawrences had, by their ability and integrity, completely won the confidence of their Indian troops.

For the remainder of this chapter it will be convenient to abandon chronological treatment and to deal with the main tendencies of Indian history since the Mutiny.

One of the consequences of the Mutiny was the transference of the powers of the East India Company to the Crown. This change, though mainly a matter of form, was calculated to impress the Eastern mind: a prince who felt it humiliating to be the vassal of an impersonal company might take pride in acknowledging the Queen of England as his suzerain. The Crown was to act through a Secretary of State advised by the Council of India, which met weekly. On November 1st, 1858, the Queen's proclamation announcing the change was published. She laid especial stress on her policy of toleration for all creeds, on her lack of any desire to extend her territories, and on her intention of respecting the rights and dignities of the Indian princes.

These promises have been faithfully observed: since that date no addition has been made to the British territories in India proper. The external relations of the Indian rulers are under the control of the Indian Government, which arbitrates in disputes, settles questions of precedence, and fixes salutes. Within their own dominions the rulers are despotic: they make their own laws, appoint their own judges and other officials, and found colleges and schools, or do without them, as they please. At each court there is stationed a British Resident, who gives advice when he is consulted, but has no independent authority. Only in cases of grave misuse of power does the Indian Government interfere: in extreme cases it may even depose the ruler and replace him by another member of the royal family. These protected states form a third of the area of India and have a total population of 77,000,000.

Though there has been unbroken peace in India itself since the Mutiny, the frontiers have continued to give trouble. Three times in the 19th century we were forced into war with Burma, which was annexed piece-meal until it was entirely British. The question of the North-West frontier again became acute in 1878 because of the continued advance of Russia, who had now extended her protectorate as far as the boundaries of

Afghanistan. In that year Russian intrigues at Kabul led to the occupation of Afghanistan by a British army. The tragic story of 1842 was repeated. A British force lost nearly a thousand killed at Maiwand, after which the victorious Afghans invested Kandahar (1880). The situation was saved by Sir Frederick (afterwards Lord) Roberts. Leaving Kabul on August 9th with an army of 10,000 British, Gurkhas, and Sikhs, in three weeks he marched 318 miles through a trackless and hostile country, and crushed the Afghans in front of Kandahar. Just before this a wise step had been taken. Abdurrahman, one of the claimants to the throne, was recognised as Amir by the British Government and was given a subsidy on condition that he had no relations with other powers. It was to the interest of India that Afghanistan should be a strong and united kingdom in firm hands. In 1886 Great Britain and Russia signed a convention for the delimitation of the frontier between Afghanistan and Russia, and in 1907 Russia, besides recognising the British protectorate over Afghanistan, came to an agreement with Great Britain about their respective spheres of influence in Persia.

Since the Mutiny India has taken the first steps in the transition from an archaic to a modern economic system. Up to the middle of the 19th century the key-note of Indian economic life was isolation. Access to the interior was rendered difficult by the absence of arms of the sea and the scarcity of navigable rivers. Until the time of Dalhousie there were no railways and very few good roads. The difficulty and expense of communication forced each village to rely on its own resources. Production on a large scale and its corollary, the division of labour, were impossible until goods could be cheaply and easily transported from one locality to another. Each village had its carpenter and its blacksmith, who did all the simple wood- and iron-work required. One characteristic of the village system, in medieval Europe as well as in India, is the recurrence of local or general famines. If, from any cause, the crops fail in a dis-

trict, it is in the position of a beleaguered city. Food cannot be brought in from more fortunate areas, and the population suffers the horrors of a siege.

At first sight it would seem that the economic structure of India has been little affected by the Industrial Revolution. At the beginning of the 20th century it contained only nine cities with a population of over 200,000; 70 per cent. of the population were engaged in agricultural pursuits, and 90 per cent. lived in villages[1]. In the last half of the 19th century, however, the isolation of the Indian village was broken down by the construction of roads and railways. The whole of Northern India is now a single market for corn. Irrigation works were carried out on an enormous scale: in 1910 there were 23,000,000 acres of irrigated land. In the Punjab alone the Government had settled a million agricultural colonists on fertile lands which, being outside the monsoon area, had formerly been rainless and arid. In addition, the Indian Government established a fund for the relief of distress in districts where the monsoon failed. Despite these improvements and precautions, famines still recurred, those of 1896 and 1899–1900 being responsible for 1,750,000 deaths in British India alone. The economic position of the Indian peasant is, in fact, one of unstable equilibrium. The *pax Britannica* has resulted in a large addition to the population, which increased by 20 per cent. between 1881 and 1911. India has a total population of 315,000,000, which means that there is great competition for land. The average holding of the peasant is five acres, on which he supports himself and his family. About one-seventeenth of his produce goes to the Government in the form of land-tax. (The Moghul Emperor used to take one-third.) In indirect taxation he pays less than 2*s.* a year. His wants are few, and he is contented with what would seem to a European peasant

[1] In 1911, 3·4 per cent. of the people of England and Wales were engaged in agriculture; 78 per cent. lived in towns or urban districts; and nearly 25 per cent. were concentrated in towns of 250,000 inhabitants or over.

a low standard of comfort. But he has a small margin of safety, and cannot make provision for lean years. His lack of capital has hitherto placed him at the mercy of the *bania*, or village corn-dealer and money-lender, whose rate of usury sometimes amounted to 200 per cent. per annum. Since the beginning of this century the growth of Co-operative Credit Societies has enabled large numbers of peasants to obtain capital without becoming hopelessly involved in debt, and has taught them thrift, foresight and independence. The Government, too, has strengthened the position of the small tenant by giving him legal protection against eviction and arbitrary increase of rent.

The characteristic features of the Industrial Revolution are not always easy to detect in agriculture, where there is little scope for the division of labour, and where the small holder, aided by the members of his family, can long maintain himself against the large farmer. One of the differences between an archaic and a modern economic system is that, in the former, goods are produced for consumption, in the latter for sale. This is simply another way of saying that the medieval village was self-sufficing, and that the modern industrial town depends upon exchange. This test cannot be applied rigidly to agriculture, as every farmer eats some of the produce of his farm. Up to the middle of the 19th century, farming in India was almost entirely for subsistence: there was little internal and practically no foreign trade in corn. In the villages money was hardly known, all payments being made in kind. India has since become one of the great corn-exporting countries of the world, and there are few villages where commutation has not taken place. Here, as in other countries, improved means of communication and the introduction of a money economy are acting as powerful solvents of rural life.

One member of the village community has already been hard hit by the Industrial Revolution. The hand-loom weaver still plies his craft, for labour is so cheap in India that machinery does not materially reduce the cost of production. But he finds

it more and more difficult to face the competition of the cotton mills, not only of Manchester, but of Bombay. For in industry the change is marked. The factory system has taken firm root. The cotton and jute mills alone employ more than a quarter of a million operatives. Mining is steadily growing in importance. In the second half of the 19th century the foreign trade increased five-fold. So far, it must be repeated, the Industrial Revolution in India is only in its infancy, but it shows every sign of vigorous growth.

During the famine year of 1896 a new danger appeared in the shape of the bubonic plague. This terrible disease, known to English history as the Black Death and the Great Plague, made its way from China, and has since remained endemic. In 14 years it caused the deaths of 7,000,000 persons. Up to the present the attempts made to deal with it have met with only a small measure of success, as they have been hampered by the religious prejudices of the people. Here, as in so many other departments of administration, the Government has been confronted by the problem of caste. There are in India more than 2,000 castes, whose relations with each other are so strictly limited that a member of the lowest caste will defile a Brahman at a distance of 64 feet. "Caste may forbid an Indian to kill plague-infected rats in his house, and religion may require him to use a polluted well." As his religious ceremonial extends to the ordinary things of life—to eating, drinking and washing—it is impossible to apply Western methods of dealing with disease by means of isolation, hospital treatment, and the establishment of a general supply of pure water.

During the last generation another problem has been steadily growing in importance—the demand of Indians, not for good government, but for self-government. The Mutiny showed the British authorities that it was necessary to get into touch with Indian opinion. In 1861 the Governor-General was empowered to nominate additional members to his Council for legislation, and the Provincial Councils were similarly given a non-official

element. The Indian members who were admitted to every Council under this Act were given an opportunity of expressing their views and of hearing the policy of the Government explained. This was the sole purpose of the innovation. The executive was to have the benefit of advice, but its actions were in no way to be controlled by the Councils, which were not regarded as having any of the powers of a Parliament.

This theory of government did not satisfy those Indians who had received a university education and had learnt from Western sources the principles of self-government. Necessarily debarred from the higher administrative posts, where alone there was room for initiative, they wished the Councils to become real Parliaments, to which the executive should be responsible. In 1885 a number of delegates from the whole of India met at Bombay and founded the Indian National Congress, which has since met annually. Largely as the result of its demands, the Indian Councils Act of 1892 gave certain definite privileges to the Councils, including the right of discussing the Budget, and added fresh members who were appointed by public bodies.

After that date the difference of opinion between the executive and the Congress grew more marked and more dangerous. The government of India is administered by a bureaucracy which has never been excelled for ability and unselfishness. The Englishmen who carried on the business of government claimed that they possessed a better knowledge of the needs of the real India than the one million Indians who could speak English. They argued that the ideas of nationality and democracy could not be applied to a country where national feeling was non-existent and where not one man in ten could read and write. They denied the right of the city lawyer or journalist to speak for the millions of peasants who knew nothing of politics. Regarding social reform as a necessary preliminary to responsible government, they asked why educated Indians did not apply themselves to the abolition of child-marriage, the freeing of widows from a life of misery, and the raising of the depressed

castes, instead of attending innumerable congresses and repeating vague phrases about self-government.

The educated Indians, on the other hand, claimed to have the interests of their country at heart as truly as any foreigners. Admitting that self-government would mean diminished efficiency, they argued that the loss would be more than counterbalanced by its bracing effect on the national character. They begged the Government to train them gradually for Home Rule by giving them instalments of responsibility.

The failure of the British authorities to sympathise with the ideals of the moderate Indian reformers strengthened the hands of the extremists. Encouraged by the prolonged resistance of the Boers, by the victory of an Asiatic over a European power in the Russo-Japanese War, and by the first successes of the Russian Duma, the younger men began to dream of severing all connection with Great Britain and establishing an Indian Republic whose civilisation should be purely Eastern. Their violent abuse in the press of everything British and their murderous attacks on officials aroused the attention of Parliament, which had taken only a fitful interest in Indian affairs since the extinction of the Company. Lord Morley, the Liberal Secretary for India, gave the Indian executive stringent coercive powers to deal with political crime, but tried at the same time to find a remedy for the discontent of which it was a symptom. In conjunction with Lord Minto, the Viceroy, he further increased the number of quasi-representative members of the Councils, so as to give a majority to the non-official element except in the Viceroy's Council. At the same time the Councils were given unrestricted powers of criticism and discussion (1909).

The Morley-Minto reforms, though welcomed by the Indian Nationalists as a token of good-will, did little to satisfy their aspirations. They already had enough opportunities for talking: what they wanted was a share of responsibility. Then came the Great War, which quickened interest in the constitution of the Empire and made Great Britain and her Allies the champions

of subject nationalities. If only for the sake of consistency, thought Indian patriots, Great Britain must concede the principle of Home Rule for India. It was obvious that the end of the War would be followed by constitutional changes of the utmost importance.

CHAPTER XVI

EGYPT

REFERENCE has already been made to Mehemet Ali, the "Peter the Great" of Egypt, and to his ambitious schemes of foreign conquest and domestic reform (pp. 66, 68–9). Shortly after his abdication in 1848 a French engineer, M. de Lesseps, revived the often-discussed plan of cutting a canal through the Isthmus of Suez. In spite of all difficulties, work was begun in 1859, and ten years later the canal was opened for traffic.

At this time the ruler of Egypt was Mehemet Ali's grandson, Ismail Pasha, who had ascended the throne in 1863. Ismail had a genius for spending money, and enjoyed opportunities which have fallen to no other spendthrift. His fondness for building palaces and laying out gardens, his imposition of crushing taxation, and his acquisition of nearly 900,000 acres of land from his subjects would not distinguish him from other Eastern despots. But Ismail combined Oriental with European methods. He sank money in all kinds of schemes for developing the country, many of which would have been quite sound if they had been carried out with honesty and skill. He made the fortune of many a contractor. He seemed positively to enjoy being swindled. But he was familiar with Western methods of acquiring, as well as of spending, money. If an author or a newspaper representative visited Egypt, he was royally entertained by the Khedive[1]. When an Egyptian loan was floated in France or England, the public remembered the glowing descriptions they had read of the fertility of the country and the enlightened ideas of its ruler, and subscribed freely.

[1] Ismail had doubled his tribute to the Sultan in return for this title, which is the Persian word for "sovereign".

This could not last for ever, and in April 1876 Ismail was forced to suspend payment of treasury bills. In 13 years he had raised the Debt from about £3,300,000 to over £90,000,000. In May he established an international commission—the *Caisse de la Dette*—to receive the interest on the Debt. Ismail had acted as his own Finance Minister, and had made no distinction between his own expenditure and that of the state; consequently the accounts were in hopeless disorder. Under these circumstances he reluctantly submitted to the Dual Control of his finances by an English official, who supervised the revenue, and a French official, who supervised the expenditure. He further promised to rule as a constitutional sovereign, acting on the advice of responsible ministers.

Ismail found the restraints of his new position so galling that in 1879 he attempted to regain his former despotic powers. Bismarck made himself the champion of the bondholders, who were alarmed at this *coup d'état*, and prevailed on the Sultan to depose Ismail in favour of his son, Tewfik.

These events aroused much discontent in Egypt. The army objected to having its numbers reduced on the score of economy, when 1,300 foreign officials were employed by the Dual Control. Devout Mohammedans, who had long viewed European civilisation with mistrust, were shocked to see their country given over to Christians. Ambitious Egyptians felt that it was time to expel all foreigners—not only Europeans, but the Turks, Circassians, Kurds, Armenians, and Syrians who had long monopolised the chief offices in the state and the higher ranks in the army. An Egyptian colonel named Arabi made himself the mouthpiece of the discontent and, with the army at his back, forced the Khedive to accept a new cabinet, in which he himself was Minister for War (Feb. 1882). The movement soon passed beyond Arabi's control and threatened anarchy. In May a Franco-British fleet anchored off Alexandria as a warning to lawless spirits; but a riot which broke out among the Arabs of the city on June 11th resulted in

the death of 50 Europeans, and caused 14,000 Christians to leave the country during the following week.

Pacific though it was, Gladstone's cabinet felt that, if other means failed, force must be used to restore order. Failing to secure the co-operation of France, Great Britain determined to act alone. On Arabi's refusal to stop work on the sea defences of Alexandria, the British fleet silenced the forts (July 11th). But the Egyptian army remained to be dealt with, and, as France still refused to join, troops were summoned from England and India. Landing at Ismailia, Sir Garnet Wolseley easily defeated Arabi at Tel-el-Kebir (Sept. 13th), and the rising collapsed.

What was to be the next step? The subsequent history of Egypt would have been considerably simplified if Great Britain could have immediately proclaimed a protectorate. But such a course would have been a breach of faith, and would have caused a serious quarrel with France. Nor was Gladstone anxious to add to British responsibilities. He was perfectly sincere in announcing that the British troops would be withdrawn as soon as the authority of the Khedive had been restored. Where he erred was in supposing that the time would soon come when Egypt might safely be left to herself. The initial success of the Arabist rising had been due, not to any strength or ability shown by its leaders, but to the incapacity and corruption of the Egyptian Government. The mere restoration of that Government, whose rottenness had been clearly revealed, would be useless: stability could not be secured without reforms, which could be introduced only by Europeans.

It is doubtful whether these considerations would have induced the Liberal Government to prolong the British Occupation of Egypt, had not events in the Sudan made evacuation impossible. Since 1819, when it was conquered by Mehemet Ali, the Sudan had been a dependency of Egypt. From 1877 to 1879 it was administered by Colonel Charles Gordon, who

had previously served under the Chinese Government, and had been mainly instrumental in crushing the Taiping Rebellion in 1863. As Governor of the Sudan Gordon did his utmost to suppress the slave trade and to do justice; but on his retirement the country relapsed into anarchy. The Sudanese longed for deliverance from the Egyptian officials, who were incompetent, avaricious, and tyrannical. When in August 1881 Mohammed Ahmed, a native of Dongola, proclaimed himself the Mahdi, or "guide", the Sudanese eagerly obeyed his call to arms.

The Khedive, who had neither the men nor the money for a campaign, nevertheless resolved to send an expedition against the Mahdi. The British Government, which should have forced him to "cut his losses" and to concentrate all his energies on Egypt, studiously refrained from bringing pressure to bear on him, imagining that it could disclaim all responsibility for the Sudan. Accordingly 12,000 worthless Egyptian troops under Hicks Pasha were sent into the heart of the Sudan, only to be cut to pieces by the Dervishes near El Obeid (Nov. 5th, 1883).

In Sept. 1883, Sir Evelyn Baring had arrived in Egypt as British Agent and Consul-General. Realising that it was impossible at the same time to reform Egypt and to reconquer the Sudan, he induced the British Government to insist on the evacuation of the Sudan, and to promise to send a mission to withdraw the garrisons. The task was finally entrusted to Gordon, who was forced on the cabinet by a newspaper agitation, after he had twice been refused by Baring. No worse choice could have been made. "Gordon was a hero, and a hero of heroes"; wrote Gladstone in 1890, "but we ought to have known that a hero of heroes is not the proper person to give effect at a distant point, and in most difficult circumstances, to the views of ordinary men." Gordon's temperament made him the last man to carry out a policy of retirement: he attached great importance to intuition, while the problem before him demanded calm, dispassionate judgment. Soon after reaching Khartum (Feb. 1884) he began to ask for reinforcements

with which to smash the Mahdi. Aghast at this change of policy, the cabinet took a long time to realise that a force would have to be sent, not to smash the Mahdi, but to relieve Gordon, who could not have retreated, even if he had wished, after the Dervish capture of Berber in May. In spite of the remonstrances of the Queen, delay followed delay, and it was not until September that Lord Wolseley was sent out. On Jan. 28th, 1885, his advance-guard came in sight of Khartum, only to find that it had fallen two days earlier, that Gordon had perished, and that the garrison had been massacred.

The tragedy of Khartum at least removed one of Baring's preoccupations and allowed him to devote his whole attention to Egypt. Even had he been given a free hand, his task would not have been easy. The ruling classes stood to lose by the introduction of Western ideas of justice and honesty. The mass of the population were too ignorant to appreciate the efforts made on their behalf, and were separated from the British by the barriers of race and religion. Still, such difficulties would not have appeared insurmountable to administrators who had been trained in India, had not their hands been tied by a political system of appalling complexity.

Egypt was legally part of the Ottoman Empire; its natives were Ottoman subjects; the Khedive was the representative of the Sultan, and might not enter into relations with other countries on his own account. Though the Sultan had long ceased to exercise any real control over Egypt, he found many opportunities of showing his dislike of the British occupation by diplomatic means. In this policy of obstruction he could always count on the support of France. Before the British occupation, French influence was supreme in Egypt: the administration was organised on French lines; the procedure of the courts was based on the Code Napoléon; the French language was used in official correspondence. For the next twenty years France did her best to thwart British policy in all parts of the world. Diplomacy, however, was not her only

weapon; in Egyptian affairs she could interfere directly. As part of the Ottoman dominions, Egypt was bound by the "Capitulations", or privileges conferred by the Sultan upon the subjects of fourteen Christian states. These privileges were of the most ample character. A resident in Egypt who was the citizen of one of these states was exempt from taxation (except the land tax and customs dues); his premises could not be entered by the police unless his consul were present; if he were accused of any crime, he was tried by his consul according to the laws of his own country. Before the Egyptian Government could promulgate a law affecting foreigners, it had to obtain the assent of each of the fourteen states—a process which was at best slow, and which was usually impossible. When it is further remembered that, besides the *Caisse*, there were other international institutions which contained French representatives, it will be seen that France had many opportunities of hindering the work of British officials in Egypt.

In fact, the whole position of the British was anomalous. Sir Evelyn Baring himself, as British Agent and Consul-General, was nominally on a level with the representatives of other countries. He might give the Khedive the benefit of his advice; but the Khedive had promised to rule as a constitutional king and to take the advice of his Cabinet, which was purely Egyptian. Very similar was the position of the other Englishmen who helped to set Egypt on her feet: the chief of them were Under-Secretaries or "Advisers", and were officially subordinate to Egyptian ministers. It was not enough that they should be efficient administrators; they needed unbounded tact: each had to conduct his own diplomacy; it was impossible to appeal to the British Foreign Office whenever a hitch occurred. Again, Egypt was still on the verge of bankruptcy, and could not afford any reforms which meant an increase of expenditure. Finally, circumstances might arise at any moment which would induce Great Britain to carry out her declared intention of withdrawing from the country.

The crux of the whole matter was finance. If, as seemed certain, Egypt became insolvent, British guidance would be replaced by international control, and she would become the battle-ground of the jealousies and rivalries of Europe. This fate was avoided only after a prolonged struggle, the issue of which was often in doubt. The burden of taxation could not be reduced or adjusted more equitably. Half the revenue went to pay the interest on the Debt. Money could not be spared for the most pressing reforms. It was not until 1888 that the danger of bankruptcy was over. From that time the financial condition of Egypt has steadily and rapidly improved. (The revenue doubled between 1883 and 1914.)

Baring made two exceptions to his rule that reforms must be postponed until the finances were absolutely stable: the danger from the Sudan made it imperative to reform the army (or rather to create a new one), and the peculiar geographical conditions of Egypt made it essential to put in order and extend the irrigation works.

In the time of Arabi the Egyptian army was thoroughly inefficient and unpopular. Villagers used to mutilate themselves to avoid conscription, and the troops were treated as slaves. Ill-clothed and ill-fed, they had all self-respect knocked out of them by their officers. In the campaigns against the Mahdi (to which they had to be taken in chains) they frequently threw away their weapons and allowed themselves to be butchered without resistance. Sir Evelyn Wood, the first English Sirdar, changed all this and made the Egyptian army a contented, steady, well-disciplined force, to which the defence of Wadi Halfa and Suakin against the Dervishes was safely entrusted.

It was essential to reform the irrigation system at once for two reasons. In the first place, irrigation was essential and had been employed in Egypt for thousands of years: the only choice lay between good and bad methods. Secondly, judicious expenditure on irrigation works would not only add to the general prosperity, but would directly benefit the Exchequer

by diminishing the remissions of taxation claimed by landholders whose crops had failed owing to insufficient water. Accordingly the Barrage below Cairo was at once repaired. The work accomplished by British engineers since those days forms perhaps the most interesting and not the least important chapter in recent Egyptian history. It is the one consequence of British rule which is thoroughly appreciated by the *fellaheen*.

When, in the early nineties, it became clear that the financial crisis was over, Baring (who was made Earl of Cromer in 1891) felt safe in attacking other abuses, and in particular those which had long existed in the administration of justice. The appointment of an English Judicial Adviser in 1891, however, was resented by those Egyptians whose authority was threatened. They received support from an unexpected quarter. On Jan. 7th, 1892, Tewfik died, and was succeeded by his son, Abbas II, a youth of barely 18, who had been educated at Vienna. Tewfik, though not a man of great ability, had possessed qualities which enabled him to play the part of constitutional king with remarkable success, and had learnt to work harmoniously with Cromer. Abbas regarded his father's career with contempt, and determined to regain the despotic powers of his grandfather, Ismail. Cromer allowed a series of affronts to pass almost unnoticed, until in Jan. 1894 the young Khedive publicly insulted the Sirdar, Sir Herbert Kitchener, at Wadi Halfa. This act of folly produced a strongly-worded remonstrance from Lord Rosebery, who was then Foreign Secretary; Abbas was compelled to issue an order of the day complimenting Kitchener on the efficiency of the army, and after this lesson he confined himself to secret intrigue.

Now that the financial danger was past, the reconquest of the Sudan became possible. Under the bloodthirsty rule of the Khalifa Abdullah (who succeeded the Mahdi in 1885) its population had been reduced from some 8,500,000 to less than 2,000,000. France was known to entertain schemes for reaching the Upper Nile from the Upper Congo. Egypt could not feel

secure, from an economic or a military standpoint, until she controlled the whole of the Nile valley.

In 1896 Kitchener began the reconquest, which was virtually completed in 1898, when the Anglo-Egyptian army inflicted a crushing defeat on the Khalifa's forces at Omdurman. As Great Britain and Egypt had shared the expenses of the expedition, the Sudan was placed under the joint sovereignty of the Queen and the Khedive. The administrative difficulties are great. The Sudan is a "grim country of flies and mosquitoes and whirl-winds and ants and dust and heat and rain." Its natives have few wants, which are easily satisfied, so that they are disinclined to work. On the other hand they regard their new rulers as deliverers from oppression: there is no "Nationalist" party.

The status given to the Sudan in 1899 made it obvious that Great Britain did not intend to evacuate Egypt in the near future. Unless France were prepared for war, she must reconcile herself to facts. Nor could it be denied that the French subjects in Egypt had shared in the general prosperity, and that they would suffer if Egypt were left to herself. Moreover, the hostile attitude which France had maintained had harmed her as much as Great Britain, and had played into the hands of Germany, who rejoiced to see them estranged. France was now anxious for diplomatic support to quell the disorder in Morocco, which threatened to spread to her colony of Algeria. After the South African War, Great Britain was equally desirous of coming to terms. Hence in 1904 an agreement was signed by which France, on consideration of being given a free hand in Morocco, undertook not to obstruct the action of Great Britain in Egypt in any manner whatsoever. The other Great Powers subsequently recognised our position in Egypt. The *Caisse* lost its administrative functions, and all other financial restrictions were removed.

In ceasing to be international, the Egyptian Question, though simplified, did not cease to exist: it became purely internal. The Nationalist Party declared that Egypt was now

quite capable of managing her own affairs, without interference from Great Britain. Lord Cromer (who resigned in 1907) did not share this view. While sympathising with the ideal of self-government for Egypt, he held that a considerable time must elapse before that ideal could safely be put into practice. There can be no doubt that he was perfectly right. Left to themselves, the Egyptians had allowed the French hospitals and irrigation works established in the time of Mehemet Ali to become absolutely useless. Even after the British occupation, those departments of the administration which were left entirely in Egyptian hands failed to catch the reforming spirit. In 1891 Mr John Scott found that the *courbash*, a long whip of hippopotamus hide, was still used to extort confessions from accused persons, that witnesses were imprisoned as a matter of course, so that they should not escape before they were required to give evidence, that the prisons were squalid and insanitary, and that the judges were ignorant and corrupt. It is hardly too much to say that all the good which has been done in Egypt in the last generation has been accomplished, not only under British guidance, but under British pressure. Politically, Egypt is still in her infancy.

The political status of Egypt was more clearly defined shortly after the outbreak of the Great War. Thinking that his opportunity had now arrived, Abbas II openly declared for Germany, the friend of absolutism, thus giving Great Britain no option but to dethrone him in favour of Hussein Kamel Pasha, the second son of Ismail (December 1914). The new ruler was given the title of Sultan, for the opportunity was taken to throw off Turkish suzerainty and to declare a British protectorate. In itself the change was merely formal. From the very beginning the British occupation of Egypt had been "a veiled protectorate", and after the Anglo-French agreement of 1904 the veil was too thin to be taken seriously even by diplomatists.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BRITISH EMPIRE: CONCLUSION

We left our account of the relations between Great Britain and the self-governing colonies at a period when *laissez faire* principles were triumphant. From the passing of the Reform Bill until the last years of the century the dominant political philosophy was strongly individualistic, deprecating state action, except for the removal of restrictions, and demanding full play for "natural" forces in political and economic life. In its imperial aspect *laissez faire* did much good by giving the colonies freedom to develop along their own lines. On the other hand, by discouraging enthusiasm and exalting enlightened self-interest into a virtue it checked the growth of imperial patriotism.

Before the end of the century men began to feel that individualism had gone too far, that it was an extreme statement of a single aspect of the truth. Biologists showed that Nature was careless of the individual, or cared for the individual only for the sake of the race. Political scientists laid stress on the organic nature of the state. Anthropologists insisted that man was a social animal. Physicians emphasised the importance of public health. Practical statesmen found themselves more and more obliged to restrain the liberty of the individual in the interests of the community. In such a mental atmosphere an atomistic conception of Empire could not thrive, and concrete facts were against it.

In the first place, the problem of holding an empire together had been considerably modified by the improvement in the means of communication. In days when the voyage from England to Australia took eight months, it might be argued

that all attempts to maintain the connection between the two countries were foredoomed to failure. To-day we live in a smaller world. Railways, steamships and telegraphs form both the nervous system and the arteries of Empire, making possible the rapid interchange of news and ideas as well as goods. The component parts of the Empire have been brought nearer to each other in time and space[1].

Then there is the bond of trade. The adoption of Free Trade by Great Britain and the grant of fiscal independence to the colonies did not have the disastrous results which were anticipated. At the end of the century, more than one-fifth of British imports came from the colonies, and more than one-third of British exports were sent thither. Just less than half the external trade of the colonies was with the mother country, and much of the rest was inter-colonial. Great Britain is the banking and financial centre of the Empire, providing the capital necessary for its development. While it would be a mistake to exaggerate the importance of these economic ties, they must be reckoned among the factors making for unity. Statesmen of a century ago regarded the Empire as a trading asset; those of the present day regard trade as an imperial bond.

It has often been pointed out that the remarkable material progress made by Great Britain in the last century and a half rests upon insecure foundations, that it is dependent, for instance, upon coal deposits which are not inexhaustible, and that it has been purchased at the sacrifice of the balance between town and country. But the outlook becomes less gloomy if one takes a wider view. The resources of the Empire have as yet hardly been surveyed, much less developed. Its mineral wealth has only been touched; its agricultural possibilities are almost boundless; it produces the raw materials used in every industry;

[1] One may notice the probable effects of aviation, *e.g.* in facilitating Imperial Conferences, in border warfare (cf. the Afghan Campaign of 1919), etc.

it needs only the men and the capital, both of which can be supplied by Great Britain. The idea has steadily gained ground that the Empire can be made self-sufficing. Such a view of Empire is not mercenary or ignoble: civilisation has its material side; man is engaged in a never-ending struggle with Nature to force her to supply his physical needs; the community, like the individual, must reach a certain standard of prosperity before it can afford the leisure for higher than material things.

There were also forces outside the Empire which helped to make it conscious of its unity. The spread of the Industrial Revolution aroused the countries of Europe to the desirability of colonies as outlets for their surplus population, as markets for their manufactures, as sources of raw material, and as a field for the investment of capital. After 1878 there was peace on the Continent, and it was after that date that Africa, the islands of the Pacific, and other unappropriated portions of the world were divided among the Powers. Thanks, however, to her start, Great Britain had already annexed the lands which were best adapted to European colonisation. The jealousy felt by her new rivals helped to create a realisation of the common interests and common responsibilities of the Empire. External pressure tended towards consolidation. In particular, once the question of defence was seriously considered, it became clear that the existence of the Empire as a whole and the security of each of its parts depended on sea-power. Before the end of the century British sea-power was challenged.

The imperial idea was strengthened by altruistic as well as by self-regarding motives. While the instinct of self-preservation and the desire for material well-being are perfectly natural and legitimate in moderation, they mar, when carried to excess, the character of a nation as of an individual. We feel nothing but contempt for the miser, and we despise the man who thinks of his own safety when there are women and children to be saved. And yet, though we often deplore the frailty of our nature, such men are rare. If unadulterated selfishness is seldom met with

in the outside world, it is almost non-existent in family life—even Shylock mourns the loss of his daughter more than that of his ducats. Now it is no mere figure of speech to call Great Britain and her colonies a family circle. Even in the middle of the nineteenth century many statesmen of both parties, who could find no logical answer to the arguments of the Manchester School, clung to their belief that there was a better fate in store for the Empire than peaceful dissolution. Since that time we have learnt that logic is an unsafe guide in human affairs, that sentiment and tradition still have power to stir men's blood and shape their actions. There is, of course, the danger of sentimentality, or of a pride in the size of the Empire rather than in its greatness. It is easy to degrade Imperialism by making it the subject of music-hall songs or electioneering speeches. But there is a pride in the Empire which is the counterpart of individual self-respect, a determination that our future shall not be unworthy of our past. The idealism which has played such a great part in building up the Empire must be reckoned among the forces which tend to keep it together.

If, then, the Empire was not gradually to break up, what was to be its future? The old theory which regarded the colonies as dependencies of Great Britain had long ceased to fit the facts. The distinction which Lord Durham had attempted to draw between imperial and local affairs had proved impracticable. Rejecting the Roman policy of *divide et impera*, he had urged that the secret of Empire was to build up the colonies into nations. But it was impossible to arrest this process half-way: to all intents and purposes Great Britain and her self-governing colonies had become a league or alliance of free nations, with the Crown as the only constitutional link between them. Without minimising the importance of loyalty to the Sovereign, was it not desirable to reinforce it by other means?

A proposal which received much support in the colonies was the establishment of preferential customs duties within the

Empire. Canada's example in admitting British manufactures at a lower rate than those of other countries has been followed by the other self-governing colonies; but up to the present Great Britain has refused to abandon her policy of strict Free Trade[1]. Without discussing the wisdom of this refusal, it may be noticed that Imperial Preference does not mean Free Trade within the Empire. The colonies are firm believers in the protective systems under which their industries have grown, and are afraid that these industries would soon disappear if exposed to the unrestricted competition of British manufacturers.

Another scheme which has been widely discussed during the past half century is that of Imperial Federation. The success of the federal principle as applied to British dependencies, as well as colonies, has suggested its extension to the Empire as a whole. It is proposed that Great Britain and the self-governing colonies should send representatives to an Imperial Parliament, which should discuss questions of common interest, such as defence and foreign relations, and to which an Imperial Ministry should be responsible. At present, it is urged, the ministers who advise the King on such matters are responsible solely to the British Parliament, which has more business than it can deal with, and which has neither the time nor the expert knowledge for proper discussion of Imperial affairs.

The opponents of this scheme emphasise, in the first place, the difficulty of constituting such a Parliament. Australia, for instance, already has seven Parliaments, and could not easily find men of leisure and ability to represent her in another, which would meet at the other side of the world, and whose powers, though important, would lie within a very narrow compass. The second objection is that, while federation means the grouping together (not the complete fusion or amalgamation) of units for certain definite purposes, the colonies themselves have not yet completed their internal unification. There are in

[1] In the Budget of 1919 Mr Austen Chamberlain gave colonial a slight preference over foreign products.

Canada some three million people who do not ordinarily speak English at home. "We have within our bounds," writes a Canadian, "a strange medley of races. By the exercise of generosity, intelligence, and care it is not beyond our power to transform these incomers into good Canadians, but it is beyond the power of any human agency to make them Britons." This quotation brings us to what is at present the most serious obstacle to Imperial Federation, the fact that it has hitherto been advocated almost entirely by Englishmen at home, and has been regarded with suspicion by the colonies. They are afraid that their rights of self-government would be endangered if they sent members to a Parliament which might commit them to a foreign policy of which they disapproved. If this Parliament were elected in proportion to population, the representatives of Great Britain would be twice as numerous as those of the self-governing colonies put together. Colonial opinion thus condemns the idea as premature until time has altered the balance of population.

Though, as far as one can see, the immediate future will not witness the accomplishment of Imperial Preference or Imperial Federation, their supporters have done good work by educating the public to "think imperially". On the question of an imperial constitution two observations of a general character may be made. In the first place, some advocates of Imperial Federation try to gain support for their scheme by warning us that the only alternative is disaster. While, however, we may admit that on paper the present constitution of the Empire looks absurd, we should remember that the political genius of our race is averse from cut-and-dried political systems, and shows itself most clearly in securing good results from institutions which are theoretically unworkable. Lord Cromer himself found it difficult to define his exact functions, but in spite of the anomalies and inconsistencies of his position, he contrived to give Egypt good government. Other nations are fond of drawing up paper constitutions which satisfy all the tests of

political scientists; we care nothing for logic, provided we can make our political machine work. Judged by this practical test, the present constitution of the Empire is a success in spite of its complete absence of design: *solvitur ambulando.*

Secondly, we should not go to the other extreme and make a virtue of our lack of system. The strongest force tending to keep the Empire together is the desire of its members to remain within it, and without this force the finest political machinery ever devised would fail. On the other hand, natural forces are most useful to man when he has learnt to control them. Nature supplies the river, but man builds the canals: without the river, irrigation works would be useless; without the irrigation works, most of the water would be wasted. The constructive statesman does not create forces so much as guide existing forces into profitable channels. Among the many problems of Empire there are two in particular which demand imperial treatment.

First, there is the administration of those portions of the Empire which are not ready for self-government. While improved means of communication have simplified many of the difficulties of the "sphere of settlement", they have intensified those of the "sphere of rule", and have accentuated the difference between the two categories by breaking down the physical barriers between them. The colour problem has become urgent. Until the age of steamships the coloured races of the Empire had neither the wish nor the means to emigrate. They have since been encouraged to work in certain colonies and dependencies, usually for a term of years; but have been excluded from others. Improved communication has made it easier for the East and the West to acquire a first-hand knowledge of each other, much of which is still of so imperfect and superficial a nature as to be more dangerous than ignorance itself. In dealing with these modern problems we need to pool the resources of the Empire, to make use of the valuable experience the colonies have gained in their relations with backward races.

The other sphere in which co-ordination is urgently needed is diplomacy. At present the diplomatic service is recruited entirely from Great Britain and its chief is responsible solely to the British Parliament. There is no permanent machinery for consulting the colonies on matters of foreign policy in which they are vitally interested.

We do possess, however, extraordinary machinery which may prove to be the germ of an imperial constitution. The Conference of colonial premiers which met in London in 1887 proved so successful that it was followed by others, which have met of late at intervals of four years. The Imperial Conference of 1917 resolved that a special conference should meet after the war to draft a constitution which should effectively arrange for "continuous consultation in all important matters of common Imperial concern, and for such necessary concerted action, founded on consultation, as the several Governments may determine." Without attempting to foreshadow the exact form this constitution will take, we may notice that the language of the resolution seems to exclude the establishment of an Imperial Legislature and to contemplate the extension of the existing principle, that the autonomous portions of the Empire should be represented by their Executive Governments.

Looking back on the period we have covered, we see two main lines of progress, internal and external. The 19th century saw an increase of democracy, of personal liberty, and of social well-being at home, and the extension of British rule over a large part of the globe. It is roughly true to say that the Liberal Party laid most emphasis on the first tendency, the Conservative on the second. German aggression threatened both, with the result that the two great parties presented a united front on the outbreak of war. Nor was the Empire less conscious of the danger. It has been said above that the self-governing colonies

are developing into nations which desire to work out their own destinies. This conception of an Empire permeated by a civilisation essentially the same, but manifesting itself in different ways, was entirely opposed to the Prussian ideal, which demanded external uniformity, not spiritual unity, and which regarded culture as something to be forcibly imposed on inferior races. Even more remarkable than the contingents from the self-governing colonies has been the assistance in men, in money, and in kind from the native chiefs of Crown colonies. The unity of the Empire in the face of common danger is a tribute to the men who have made it what it is. A comparison between the Empire of to-day and the Empire of a century ago encourages the belief that the difficulties of the present can be surmounted. The German belief in British "decadence", and the fears of Englishmen that there might be some truth in the charge, have been proved groundless. In the short breathing-space between the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, Wordsworth wrote:—

> When I have borne in memory what has tamed
> Great Nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
> When Men change Swords for Ledgers, and desert
> The Student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
> I had, my Country! am I to be blamed?
> But when I think of Thee, and what Thou art,
> Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
> Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
> But dearly must we prize thee; we who find
> In thee a bulwark of the cause of men;
> And I by my affection was beguiled.
> What wonder, if a Poet, now and then,
> Among the many movements of his mind,
> Felt for thee as a Lover or a Child!

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